

THE BELL RINGER



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MBA Puts On New Backpacks



Seniors Niles Meltesen and Henry Pitt pose with their newly donned Pando backpacks.

PHOTO: Carter Ozburn

By Jack Farringer and Brady Bauer

News Editor and Staff Writer

At this point, all MBA students have received a brand new Pando backpack. These backpacks are part of a test program that will be the culmination of a two-year project to help improve the daily lives of students.

The backpacks were designed by students and for students; the development research even included students from MBA, in addition to students from Metro Nashville Public Schools. In an effort to learn more about the backpacks, we spoke to the developer and founder of the company, John Loudenslager.

In the past, Mr. Loudenslager led the design, development, and engineering teams at several well-

known companies, such as YETI, PING, Otterbox, and Solo. When Mr. Loudenslager and his family moved to Nashville in 2020, he teamed up with David Ingram to found Insights 4 Innovation LLC.

The name of the parent company is derived from a desire to design products based on user-centered feedback and insights. The larger company serves as a parent for their first product launch, Pando Bags. The name Pando is Latin for “spread” and is the name of the world’s largest individual organism, a forest of Aspen trees all connected by a single root system. This name represents the company’s emphasis on connection and community, while mentoring young minds.

The inspiration for the bag came from Mr. Loudenslager’s sons, Max ('26), and Eli ('28). They were both

frustrated with the existing backpacks on the market and expressed these feelings to their father. As someone with a history of working in design and engineering, Mr. Loudenslager asked his sons, “Do y’all have a better idea?” So began the process of designing a better backpack.

The process begins with what designers call “design thinking.” The goal of this stage is to get into the mindset of users and learn about problems with current products on the market and the potential upgrades for future products.

Finding patterns of common issues is key to creating solutions that improve the overall product. To do this, the development team interviewed students in groups, specifically Ms. Raines’s advisory, to learn about their most common problems with backpacks.

Joel Frahm Visits the Jazz Band

By Brady Bauer and John Howard
Staff Writers

In recent years, the MBA music program has been blessed by the Pat Patrick Music Fund. The fund was established by Pat’s friends in 2016 to honor his memory by celebrating the jazz, rock 'n roll, and classic dance band music that he created and enjoyed for more than fifty years.

The fund provides several students each year with the opportunity to travel to New Orleans or Memphis in order to learn about the roots of modern jazz in two of its birthplaces. Additionally, the fund allows MBA to invite professional musicians to teach music classes.

This year, Joel Frahm and six members of the Nashville Symphony accompanied the jazz bands and the orchestra at the fall concert and taught classes the following Monday.

Mr. Frahm was born in Wisconsin in 1969. He spent the majority of his childhood there before moving to West Hartford, CT, during his freshman year in high school. For the remainder of his high school career, he attended Hall High School in West Hartford.

Hall has a renowned music program that has produced many well-known jazz musicians in recent years, including Kris Allen, Jimmy Macbride, Garrett Sayers, Drew Sayers, Richie Barshay, Joel Frahm, Erika von Kleist, Brad Mehldau, Pete McGuinness, Noah Preminger, Alexa Tarantino, and Gregg Kallor. Hall is also the alma mater of a Nashville trumpet teacher named Sam Merrill, who has worked with many MBA students.

Mr. Frahm discovered his passion for music as a young child learning the piano. He began playing the saxophone in 5th grade for the

About Time: African American History on Horizon

By Simon Cian
Assistant News Editor

In 2022, the College Board offered the first AP African American Studies Pilot (APAAS) class in a select 60 schools around the country. In 2023 the class will be expanded to more than 200 schools. MBA has requested to be included as one of the pilot schools, and, if accepted, the class will be offered as a senior elective this coming school year.

APAAS is a groundbreaking class as it is the first time a wide-reaching and national organization such as the College Board has legitimized the study of African American history. The class covers not only the history of African Americans but also the rich culture of African American music, and movies, and their impact in American literature, society, and technology.

Instead of teaching African American history as an addendum to US history, the APAAS class looks to teach a complete and multifaceted view of 400 years of African American history. One of the major downfalls of teaching African American history as an add-on to other histories is that classes often tend to focus only on slavery and the Civil Rights Movement.

Dr. Bailey, head of the History Department, spoke to me about the importance of this class at MBA.

The merits of adding this course are profound, and interest is strong. The vibrance of both the African American Studies Club and Tearing Down the Wall over recent years are strong indicators that MBA is ready for APAAS. The struggles, contributions, and achievements of African Americans are central to the broader tapestry of American history

and culture, and that will continue to be an important part of the sophomore US History course. APAAS will dig much deeper into those stories and view them through different lenses than one would typically use in a general survey of US History.

At a time in America when culture wars and racial inequality have sparked debate and protest, the new African American Studies class looks to bring new discussion to MBA about a part of American history that in some states has become harder and harder to teach due to restrictions on how teachers talk about race. By teaching APAAS, MBA is showing that it can continue to have meaningful dialogue about important topics such as race even when many in Tennessee and in the South feel uncomfortable or are even against its teaching.

Wyatt Walters, a senior, feels that the new class is an important step for MBA, saying, "I believe that African American History should be taught at MBA, because I believe that the history of black people in America is not discussed enough here." While the class will not be required, Walters believes that in the future it should be adopted as a prerequisite for

"African American history is extremely important but too often overlooked"

graduation.

Since MBA is one of the best schools in the country, it is full of the future leaders of America. The majority of the students at MBA will also be white as well. If these young



Founders of the new AP African American History course gather at Howard University in Washington, DC.
PHOTO: Wikimedia Commons

men learn about the struggles of African American history early on in their life, then they may feel inclined to use the positions of power that they will obtain in their adulthood to help out the African American community. It will take the leaders of the white community and the Black community to make a difference and it's a vital step to plant the seed in the future white leaders of America so they can help make change happen.

Walters added an important point on the teaching of African Americans in US History. He said, "AP US feels as if it limits African Americans to just slavery. It feels that we barely talk about African Americans unless it's during black history month or if we are talking about how slavery affected politics of the time. AP US doesn't focus on Black people, instead, it focuses on how Black people were used to catapult white men to power. The whole course seems like it's about white people in America instead of everyone in the United States."

Walters ended by saying that he

feels as a Black man that African American history is extremely important but too often overlooked. He feels that some white Americans do not understand the full extent and richness of African American history and culture. At MBA he sometimes feels that students do not grasp the challenges that many Black Americans face, but Walters believes that AP African American Studies will give students the opportunity to learn and openly discuss African Americans' role in America.

The new AP African American Studies class promises to provide MBA students with the opportunity to engage with a topic that few in our community choose to discuss or learn about. By providing students with knowledge about all aspects of African American achievements, culture, and history, the class will give students a new perspective on African Americans which differs from the traditional perspective which only focuses on slavery and Civil Rights.

MBA To Adopt AP Precalculus in 2023

By Kayneer Majhail
Contributor

Currently, the College Board offers only three options for AP math: AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, and AP Calculus BC. But, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, the College Board will debut AP Precalculus, adding an additional option for math students around the country. MBA plans on adopting the course, which will primarily be taken in place of College Algebra and Trigonometry Honors.

The College Board recently laid out their reasoning and goals behind the creation of the new class. To begin, the class was formed in response to an excess of high school students around

the nation entering college unprepared for college-level math. The goals of the class are to prevent the need for remedial math classes in colleges, to prepare students to take either AB or BC AP Calculus in high school, and to give students the opportunity to earn a college credit.

In the case of MBA, the main function of the class will reflect that second goal, preparing students for some form of AP Calculus. AP Precalculus is unique as an AP in the fact that it serves as a progression toward another future class and is not traditionally considered a college level course. For this reason, it is unlikely that many top colleges will accept exam results for credit, but it is always worth checking the specific policies of

the schools you are interested in.

The current teaching structure for College Algebra and Trig Honors consists of three quarters covering precalculus material, and then the class spends the fourth quarter introducing calculus itself. This current plan is extremely popular in the math department as it does an excellent job preparing students to take on an AP Calculus class the following year.

As a credit to the repeated success of this program, the math department's plan is to teach essentially the same class in the same way, just under a new name. For this reason, the department will likely make the end of the year AP exam optional for students in the debut year. If the returning

scores are resoundingly positive, the exam will become mandatory in the future. On the other hand, overwhelmingly poor scores would merit a reevaluation of the plan.

Many juniors are excited to add another AP to their array of classes and to become acquainted with an AP math class before taking on more challenging classes their senior year. This change will also allow students who would be taking College Algebra and Trig as a senior to cap their transcript with an AP and earn a college credit that would otherwise not be available. Overall, AP Calculus will be a nice complement to many students' schedules without shaking up the current system drastically.

Recapping Nashville's Recent Midterm Elections

By **Raleigh Maxwell**
Opinions Editor

On Election Day 2022, Nashville residents entered the polls with the intent of determining their next members of Congress. Many of these locals did not realize, however, that Nashville was now represented by multiple districts, each with its own member of Congress.

From 2013 until earlier this year, all of Nashville had been contained in one district: Tennessee House District 5. In February 2022, however, Governor Bill Lee signed a new congressional map into law, effectively splitting Nashville up into three different districts. This strategy, which is known as gerrymandering, was introduced by the Republican-dominated Tennessee state legislature in an attempt to increase the number of House seats held by their party.

District 5, which was previously located in the heart of Nashville, typically elected a Democrat, with Representative Jim Cooper holding the seat since 2003. By contrast, this year Nashville has been split up into Districts 5, 6, and 7. Districts 6 and 7 were seen as solidly Republican districts, so Democrats and Republicans focused much of their



A sign of ballot encouragement seen all over Nashville

PHOTO: Raleigh Maxwell

attention on District 5, which was seen as the most competitive seat of the three.

Despite the attempts at maintaining their control over District 5, the Democrats were ultimately unsuccessful, with Republican-nominee Andy Ogles winning 56.3% of the vote, compared to Heidi Campbell's 42.6%. The former mayor's win marks a momentous change in both local Republican strategy and in the GOP's overall congressional playmaking.

Ogles's victory represented a "flip" because the seat was previously held by a Democratic lawmaker. District 5 proved to be one of a few important districts that Republicans

gained in order to secure control of the House in the 2022 elections. With the Democratic majority being very slim, it was especially important that Republicans capitalize on the newly drawn district to maximize their chances of winning the House and hold as many seats as possible.

On the national level, Republicans did succeed in re-taking the House, but their majority turned out to be far less than they were hoping for. As of right now, Republicans have 221 seats and Democrats hold 213 seats, meaning that almost the entire Republican caucus needs to be on board for any new legislation to pass.

In Tennessee's other House elections, nothing much really

changed. Seven of Tennessee's other eight House districts re-elected their Republican representatives, and the district that includes Memphis re-elected their Democratic lawmaker.

Likewise, the makeup of Nashville's representatives in the state legislature largely remained unchanged, but two notable seats were left open by existing politicians. The first is State House District 59, where former Democratic Representative Jason Potts decided not to seek re-election. Caleb Hemmer, the Democratic nominee, defeated Michelle Forman, the Republican, in a very tight election with only a four-point margin.

State Senate District 19 housed a similar duel between Charlane Oliver and Pime Hernandez, representing the Democrats and Republicans, respectively. Oliver, the clear favorite, won by a huge margin, reflecting her district's location in the heart of Nashville.

The new politicians on both the national and state level will now begin to further their political careers at a time when politics affects so many people's lives. Ogles, especially, will serve to be an important vote for the narrow Republican majority in the House.

Big Red Debate Plans to Remain Hot

By **Kavneer Majhail**
Contributor

The Big Red debate team doesn't plan to stop its streak. After high finishes at some of the biggest tournaments around the country, the team enters the second semester with a bright outlook. These successes testify to the hard work and commitment that all the debaters have put in so far. Big Red debate continues to rank as one of the top programs in the nation, claiming victory throughout the country. This year the team closes the books with one of the most successful semesters it has ever seen.

The season started at the tournament hosted by the Greenhill School in Dallas, Texas. The tournament, the largest season opener, hosts the most prestigious Round Robin of the entire year. The partnership of Chanden Climaco ('23) and Raleigh Maxwell ('24) won the Round Robin with an impressive record of 12-1. Such a record hasn't been achieved since Aden Barton and Julian Haberman, MBA alumni, won it in 2018. During the official tournament, Maxwell and Climaco got to the semifinals, losing on a close decision. Jack Young ('23) and Cy Turner ('24) went undefeated in the pre-elimination rounds and

lost on a close decision in the quarterfinals.

The streak kept going. At the Marist Street Ivy Invitational, one of the biggest tournaments in the south, the partnership of Lenox Leverett ('23) and Joseph Hastings ('24) took the top seed and won the tournament undefeated. Lenox was named the best speaker of the tournament alongside Res Seibels ('26) and Fox Travis ('26), who placed 2nd and 5th respectively.

In the month of November, MBA sent teams to the Glenbrooks and Michigan tournaments. These tournaments are the most competitive and prestigious tournaments of the first semester. Climaco and Maxwell made it to the finals of both tournaments, making them one of the most formidable partnerships in the country.

According to a poll of the top 15 debate coaches from around the nation, Climaco and Maxwell are the 2nd best high school debate team. They're joined by Jack and Cy as well as Russell Howard ('26) and Kavneer Majhail ('25), who hold the 10th and 18th spots respectively. While not ranked yet, the team of Marshall Green ('23) and Sanjith Geevargheese ('24) holds impressive wins over the



Debaters Chanden Climaco ('23) and Raleigh Maxwell ('24) brace themselves for another round of online tournaments.

PHOTO: Raleigh Maxwell

first and third seeds in the poll.

With almost the entire squad returning from the previous season, the team has been stronger than ever. The second-year debaters and novices continue to find success at their tournaments. The return of in-person debate brings new enriching experiences for all the debaters. Not only does the team have a skilled set of seniors and juniors, but it also has large amounts of potential in the younger classes.

With the second semester on its way, the debate team sets its sights on the

Tournament of Champions, the most prestigious national championship. The partnerships of Climaco and Maxwell, Young and Turner, Howard and Majhail, and Green and Geevargheese have all qualified by each receiving 2 bids, points assigned by reaching deep elimination rounds at major tournaments. Leverett and Hastings have been inches away from their second bid but are yet to receive it. With a promising second semester ahead, the debate team is excited to pursue its goals.

Companionship and the Constitution: MBA and Lithuania

By Aiden Becker
Staff Writer

Although Covid hasn't felt like a primary concern for the school in a while, I am happy to report that one of our major programs has returned for the first time since Covid's outbreak. As many of you may recall, MBA had an exchange program with LSMU in which we were able to send students to Vilnius, Lithuania, before 2020. In January, a group of sophomore students helped rekindle our relationship with LSMU by giving a presentation on the US constitution. These students were able to fit in the preparation of a presentation on top of a busy week, and I am grateful to have each of their contributions.

The subject of our presentation was on the US constitution and government, comparing it to the government system and constitution of Lithuania. Over a Google meet, we were able to go in depth about how our constitution allows our government to function properly, such as how each branch works and its specific role. We also talked about how we, as citizens, viewed the government and how it affects our everyday lives.

After talking about the government's role in society, we



The event marked the first interaction between MBA and LSMU since 2020.
PHOTO: Aiden Becker

presented the constitution and expressed our feelings about how its amendments offer us freedom and play a vital role in how we are able to assert ourselves. We ended the presentation by speaking about certain flaws in our government and

“The students shared similar music taste and expressed interest in the sports that both schools participate in.”

constitution.

After finishing the presentation, we opened the floor to questions about our presentation or about anything related to the United States governmental structure. We had a well-mannered and meaningful conversation on subjects such as the limitations of free speech and the pros and cons of a two-party system. Their interest in our government and finding similarities between our constitution and theirs was meaningful, as I felt their engagement in learning more about our governments, their similarities, and their differences.

After finishing our conversation about the US, we shifted our focus on the war between Ukraine and Russia. As most readers are likely aware, Lithuania and Russia share a border, which has created much angst about the threat of a Russian movement into Lithuania. As expected, this looming possibility has instilled some fear in Lithuanians, but, for the most part, they are optimistic for the future and continue to live normal lives.

Many of the students from LSMU had competitions coming up for a variety of subjects, like English, biology, chemistry, history, and math. It was interesting to also hear about their interests, such as music, theater, sports, and art. The students shared similar music taste with us and expressed interest in the sports that both schools participate in. The conversations we had with them allowed me to form an understanding of why it is important to reconnect with our friends from Lithuania.

It was important to rekindle our friendship with the students from LSMU because our program had been at a standstill since the pandemic. We hope that by restarting our connection with the school and their students we can foster a fantastic relationship for the near future.

Andor Reviewed: A New Thrilling Star Wars Series

By Samuel Kinch
Contributor

Coming off of the disappointing releases of *Obi-Wan Kenobi* and *The Book of Boba Fett*, Tony Gilroy's *Andor* is the breath of fresh air that Star Wars fans needed to renew their faith in the franchise in its Disney era. Set five years before *Rogue One* (2016), *Andor* explores the seeds of the rebellion. Its focus is future rebel leader Cassian Andor, who starts off as a petty criminal but through his experiences of the oppression of the Empire becomes its fiercest enemy.

Andor covers the experiences of *Andor* characters, some well known from other Star Wars content, such as Mon Mothma and Saw Gerrera, as well as new characters. Unlike in past Star Wars live-action shows, I truly loved every new character, but my favorites were Dedra Meero, an imperial officer, and Luthen Rael (played by Stellan Skarsgård), a leader of a revolutionary rebel network closely related to the ultimate rebellion in *Rogue One*.

The brilliance of *Andor* is not difficult to pin down. *Andor* is blessed with the rare combination of amazing plot development, engaging and

original characters, stellar acting, breathtaking cinematography and set design, and a director who on the one hand understands the lore and gravity of the Star Wars franchise, but also fights to create a unique and complex narrative that explores a never-before-seen part of the Star Wars universe. This means bucking expectations and creating something new and interesting.

Tony Gilroy, *Andor*'s showrunner, focuses on the gritty side of Star Wars and the rebellion. Whereas *Rogue One* is heroic and grandiose with the pure feeling of sacrificial victory at the end of the film, *Andor* is dark and poignant. In *Andor*, the audience is made to fully understand the wrath of the Empire. The Empire closes its fist around citizens, thoughtlessly sending them to labor camps for nonexistent crimes and doubling the sentences of remaining prisoners under the guise of order. More so than any other piece of Star Wars content, *Andor* gives the audience a profound look inside the Empire, more specifically, the ISB, the Imperial Security Bureau. It is through this lens that fans can better understand the origins of the rebellion and the extent of the evil of the Empire.



Andor is Star Wars's new Disney-Plus exclusive installment.
PHOTO: Wikimedia Commons

I do not think I have ever been more enthralled by any show or movie than I was when I watched *Andor*. Although the first couple of episodes start slow, the quality of the exposition and the suspense built make up for it. Gilroy uses these beginning episodes incredibly well, which leads to a greater audience connection to the characters. This extra time allows the audience to fully see Cassian Andor's character development, taking place over 10 episodes. In *Kenobi* and *The Book of Boba Fett*, the time in between climatic moments was uninteresting, and the episodes were genuinely difficult to get through. In *Andor*, every single scene felt like the

perfect addition to the progression of the plot and the development of the arcs of the characters, which, even for S tier shows, is difficult to accomplish.

The time and effort given to every aspect of this show pay off tremendously for Tony Gilroy and the Star Wars live-action team. Instead of rushing the writing and production of this show, Gilroy clearly took his time in the creation of this new world. The result: an incredibly well written, breathtaking, and powerful show that has exceeded the expectations of even the most optimistic Star Wars fans—without one lightsaber. I recommend *Andor* to everyone.

Even More Faculty/Staff Welcomed to Hill

Mrs. Beth Anderson

By Stephen Hagerty
Assistant Opinions Editor

Beth Anderson comes to Montgomery Bell Academy as the new manager of the admissions office. A former MBA mom, she is married to Coach Anderson. Her son, Tripper Capps, graduated from MBA in 2020 and now majors in political science while playing baseball at Kenyon College.

As part of MBA's admissions office, Mrs. Anderson hopes to make the process seamless. She wants to be a source of assistance and information for incoming families, and in many ways, hopes to become an ambassador for MBA.

Before joining the MBA faculty, Mrs. Anderson was the director of events for Richmond Country Club. At Richmond, she organized everything

from weddings to golf tournaments. Although she loved her job, she eventually grew tired of working every weekend and decided to change careers.

With the love she developed for the school as a parent and spouse, Mrs. Anderson thought that MBA would be the perfect place for her. She emphasized just how grateful she was for all that MBA has done for her family.

While she has been living in Nashville for the last 19 years, Mrs. Anderson is originally from El Paso, Texas. She stayed in Texas for college, graduating from SMU with a BA in Broadcast Journalism. Although her career took a much different turn, she lamented how she originally wanted to be a sports reporter.

Mrs. Anderson's main hobby, as you might guess, is following the world of sports, especially baseball. Her favorite MLB teams are an odd mix of the Braves and the Red Sox.

She also enjoys exercising, running, and gardening — really anything outdoors. She is also a big dog lover; she has a hound/lab mix named Jack that she and her husband rescued from the Humane Association.

As manager of the admissions office, Mrs. Anderson works with schools and parents in the fall to set up shadow days. Part of this duty includes cooperating with MBA student ambassadors to find shadow hosts. She also works with families in helping them submit applications. As new student applications start to roll in, Mrs. Anderson puts together info for the admissions committee to move to the next step of offering contracts to students who get accepted.

MBA welcomes Mrs. Anderson with open arms and looks forwards to her contributions to the school as manager of the admissions office.



Mrs. Beth Anderson
PHOTO: Stephen Hagerty

Mr. Thomas Amster

By Nate Cantrell
Sports Editor

Thomas Amster is a new member of the MBA faculty who will serve in the Tech Department and help coach Junior School soccer. Amster spent his childhood in Birmingham and Montgomery, where he attended Trinity Presbyterian School.

At Trinity, he earned a position as a defensive lineman on the football team and served as an all-purpose soccer player (*i.e.*, he played as a goalkeeper, central midfielder, and forward for the Wildcats).

After graduating in 2018, he attended his dream school and the only college he applied to, Auburn University, where he carried on his

family legacy. At Auburn, he majored in Communications and minored in Sports Coaching.

He held many different jobs before graduating, working as an intern in media relations for Auburn Athletics, a contributor to the ProU Sports App, and a member of the media staff for the Columbus Lions arena football team (where he also commentated a few of the games as a color announcer).

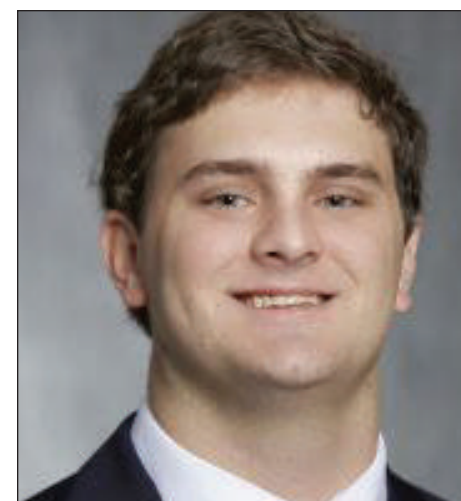
In December 2021, Amster decided that he wanted to pursue a teaching/coaching career after reflecting on the relationship that he had had with his middle school soccer coach. After graduating this past May, he came across MBA and now holds the title of the youngest faculty member on campus.

Amster looks forward to improving the Hill's media presence, heading

our new and improved broadcasting movement, and coaching for years to come. Amster is already getting active in clubs on campus, acting as a faculty sponsor for FCA.

When asked about some of his favorite things outside of MBA and his career, he pointed to *The Great Escape* (1963) for his favorite movie, recalling watching that movie several times with his father as a child. For his favorite show, Amster pointed to his love for *Survivor* and is proud to say he has seen all 43 seasons of the show. For the all-important music category, Amster loves jam bands and folk music, mentioning Zach Bryan as his newest obsession and Jason Isbel as his tried and true favorite.

Amster follows basketball, football, and soccer more than any other sports. He is a New York Giants, Orlando Magic, Chelsea FC, and USMNT fan



Mr. Thomas Amster
PHOTO: Scholar

and was excited to watch the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Please help me welcome Thomas Amster and all he has to offer to the Hill!

Ms. Mary Angell

By Frank Pierce
Staff Writer

Mary Angell grew up in Michigan and joined the University of Kentucky as a student-athlete in track and field. After receiving her undergraduate degree, she went on to attain a Master's degree in Education at the University of Southern California.

While in graduate school, she acquired an interest in Alumni service, noting how impressed she was with "USC's strong Alumni Community and the benefits that came with it."

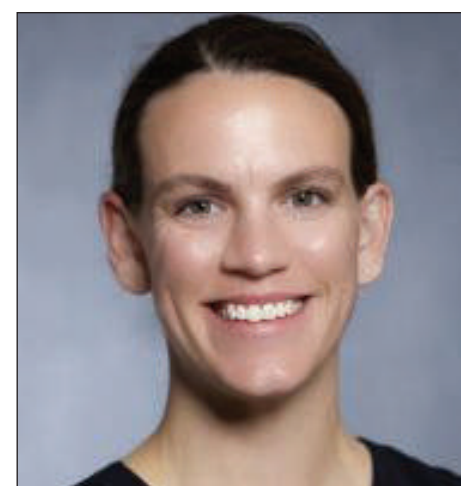
She found a similarly close-knit community here at MBA and wanted to become a part of it.

Before she came to MBA, Angell had worked only at colleges and universities, making this job her first at a secondary school. Upon her arrival, she was shocked at the countless number of opportunities that MBA students are offered and wished more students had the same opportunities as we do on the Hill.

Since coming to MBA, Angell commented on her enjoyment of living in Nashville. She's been able to reconnect with a couple of her friends from college and even forge new

friendships here. Angell loves all the things that are available in Nashville, such as the culinary variety or the various outdoor opportunities.

Angell is excited to be a part of the MBA community, and she's thankful for how she's been treated by everyone she's encountered. She has especially enjoyed working with Alumni, and she looks forward to meeting more students when she helps out with the track and field team this spring. Please help me welcome Ms. Angell to the MBA community.



Ms. Mary Angell
PHOTO: Scholar

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The staff of *The Bell Ringer* prepares all copies at Montgomery Bell Academy.

Editor's Note

By **Carter Ozburn**
Editor-in-Chief

Words are cool. We use different sets of them to communicate information. Words of hate and words of love can be spoken simultaneously, and words mean different things to each of us. This newspaper is filled with words, the hard-earned words of a diverse student body with varying interests, backgrounds, and perspectives. *The Bell Ringer* stands as a pure representation of the student body, and that is a wonderful thing. I have at some points attempted to pull the strings a bit in favor of my personal interests, but have rescinded these efforts to keep *The Bell Ringer* a true expression of the voice of the MBA community.

My job is hard. I have to take the ideas expressed by my excellent writers and produce something they are proud of, without staining it with my own perspective or ego. Editors throughout the years have gotten a bad rap, generally for editing as a writer, not a reader. But I am so thankful for this job because I love seeing the final product. I love writers talking to me in the halls about their articles; I can hardly contain my excitement. I love writers at meetings throwing 20 ideas at me in a 20-second span. Most of all, I love writers seeing their work in the paper and being proud of it. The paper is nothing without the free expression of the student body here on the hill.

Looking at the news, we see are countless references to our world today as the "information age." Through our phones, we are rounded by these waves of information, and this flow seems to be the only constant part of our increasingly volatile society. Millenniums of development, be it political, social, cultural, etc. are at our fingertips, literally. Content is rapidly losing value as it is simultaneously being condensed to cater to our interests: our interaction is the most valued commodity in the technology world, producing an individual lean in every media platform.

The ability to curate an image, especially online, is something unique to our generation.

While in the past, image upkeep lay in the realm of celebrities, our generation maintains an acute distinction between our image and true self. Overgeneralizing our generation as identity-obsessed, lazy, and egotistic is lazy as well as tone-deaf. The crippling anxiety hallmarking our generation is a testament to this online culture of condensed identities and consumer-driven comparison.

An example of this condensation is the college essay. As seniors attempt to slice and crop their entire personalities into 650 words, colleges continuously ask one simple thing. "Just be yourself," they say. "The least favorite thing we see is students being fake." That simple condition is simultaneously hilarious and sad, because how easy is it to be fake? You can make a new account on any platform in seconds, and be anyone you like.

That's why a printed form of content directed toward the MBA community is so important. While our online lives are intensely personal, with our image being solely driven by our hands, the newspaper is a collaborative effort. There is no image to uphold, no constant comparison to our peers (except Logos, but no matter). Our identities are one and the same, wrapped up in the variegated tapestry of students that make up our student body, faculty, staff, and community at large. Our expression is influenced by the constant onslaught of information as young people in the 21st century; there is no pressure or expectation of perfection, just the hope of matched passion.

This is *not* an ad for the newspaper in the newspaper. I'm not that meta. It's more of a suggestion and a hope for my generation, one that can choose to use or be used by our native technology. Your identity is worth more than that, and with organizations like the newspaper or any group where you can find community, I hope you also find people who will affirm that. We all as members of this community should continue to do that for each other, to maintain the healthy close-knit MBA community I won't shut up about.

Do you like to write, shoot
photos, or design?
Join our Team!
Contact Editor-in-Chief Carter
Ozburn or Faculty Advisor Mr.
Bassett if you are interested.

New Faculty/Staff Continued

Dr. Jian Farhoumand

By Nathan Hersel and J.D. Abernathy
Staff Writers

Dr. Farhoumand is one of the new English teachers and one of the new Latin teachers at MBA. He was born in London, but he was brought up in Brighton, East Sussex, on the south coast of England (about an hour south of London).

Farhoumand attended Eton College in Berkshire, the University of Edinburgh, the London Film School, Sussex University, and also the University of Brighton for his Ph.D. He always felt grateful for the insightful and encouraging teachers that he had throughout his schooling. They always encouraged him in his studies as well as in extracurricular activities, such as writing a play, making a film, or editing the school magazine.

Farhoumand commented how lucky he was to attend some fantastic schools and universities in the UK, and always appreciated the opportunities and experiences they afforded him—be they academic,

in general—not just as a career but as his vocation in life. His doctoral thesis focused on the influence of cinema on American poet Charles Bukowski and other key members of the Beat Generation, such as Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Frank O'Hara.

Farhoumand also enjoys teaching Latin, a subject that he studied at the university level, at MBA. He thinks learning Latin as a boy helps you to organize your thoughts and understand the basics of all languages, especially in regard to grammar.

Farhoumand was just a boy at Eton in the 1990s when MBA first started its student exchange there. He remembers meeting the first cohort of brave MBA boys who flew over and joined them in their sixth-form creative writing class. Through them, he learned about the culture and work ethic that MBA entails.

Over the years, he regularly visited Tennessee to stay with his cousins and has always thought of Nashville as his favorite city in the US. He knew that one day he would want to live here.

Around the time he was graduating with his Ph.D., his good friend Brenda Stein—the wonderful local artist who created the beautiful bird installation, “Soaring Together,” that now hangs from the skylight in the Wellness Center—introduced him to Headmaster Gioia, and the rest is history.

Farhoumand admires how, when you first walk onto the MBA campus, it feels like an Ivy League university with all of its impressive buildings and world-class facilities. He couldn't think of another school anywhere in the world that has these characteristics.

He enjoys the happy and encouraging atmosphere here at MBA. Although it might sound cliché, Farhoumand “appreciates

“Although it might sound cliché, Dr. Farhoumand appreciates more than anything the school mantra of Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete”

sporting, or extracurricular.

While he was lecturing at the University of Brighton, he realized how rewarding a good teacher was to his own success. To give something back feels immensely important for the future. He says for him, personally, he thinks of academia—and literature



Dr. Jian Farhoumand posing in front of the real Parthenon.
PHOTO: Nathan Hersel

more than anything the school mantra of Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete.” He thinks MBA offers a classic, well-rounded education in a unique, modern package: a rare combination for a Secondary School.

“I was a member of the then-highest ever student expedition on Mount Everest in 1996”

If you ever find yourself in need of a conversation starter with Farhoumand, just bring up his illustrious climbing career. If you do so, you'll probably hear something like this: “I was a member of the then-highest-ever student expedition on

Mount Everest in 1996, and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in 2011.” Or, if you want a more serious discussion topic, ask him for some simple advice; he is a man with many words of wisdom: “Aim high. It doesn't really matter if you make mistakes along the way as long as you're doing your best, learning on your feet, and always trying to improve. Be honest with yourself about the results you're getting, try hard to work well in a team, and remember it's okay to ask for help or advice. I've learned that people generally want to help you in life. So, stay positive, smile, and aim high.”

Please help me welcome Dr. Farhoumand to the MBA community.

Mrs. Laura Rouse

By Isaac Roark
Guest Top of the Hill Contributor

Laura Rouse is joining MBA as the new assistant in the Junior School Office. She was born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, and attended the University of Illinois with a D1 Soccer Scholarship for her undergraduate studies. She was even named Big Ten Player of the Week at one point.

Rouse is married and has two children, one of whom attends MBA. Her job includes planning for the

junior school class trips: the seventh-grade trip to Camp Laney and the eighth-grade trip to Atlanta.

Rouse brings in prior understanding as a commercial designer to create and organize the graphic designs for the programs at Grandparent's Day and Junior School Evening With the Arts. In addition, her background entails a wide variety of experience in marketing and communications.

In response to some quick-fire questions, Rouse commented that her favorite food is sushi. For her favorite candy, Rouse enjoys any kind of sour gummies. Her favorite movie is Mrs.

Doubtfire, from which stems her self-proclaimed greatest achievement: she can recite each scene from memory!

Rouse has enjoyed interacting with all the students who stop by the office and admires how the school raises us to be young men from such an early age. Whether a student has needed a replacement keycard or checked in from a doctor's appointment, Rouse has been impressed with the respect and kindness everyone has given her.

Please help me welcome Mrs. Rouse and her family to the MBA community.



Mrs. Laura Rouse PHOTO: Scholar

New Faculty/Staff Continued

Mr. Michael Van Citters

By Luke Keller
Staff Writer

Michael Van Citters grew up in Los Angeles, California, where he attended a co-ed private school that in many ways gave him a similar experience to a student at MBA. He went on to attend Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, where he received his Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy and Classical Studies. After receiving his undergraduate degree, Mr. Van Citters made his way to MBA, where he currently serves as a teaching intern.

Acting as a teaching intern is one of the most dynamic, multifaceted positions at the school. But, with all the classes he's covered and

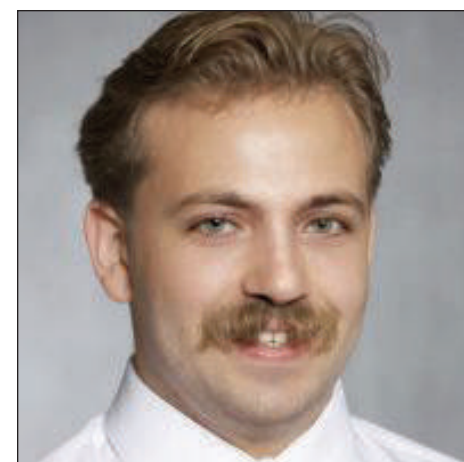
responsibilities he's fulfilled, Van Citters has already immersed himself in many aspects of MBA student life in just the first few months that he has spent here.

Some of his roles around campus include but are not limited to teaching the 8th grade research class, chaperoning the debate program, and working in the library. In addition to all these duties, you can still find Van Citters substituting for a wide variety of classes across different disciplines.

In my own experience, Van Citters stepped in seamlessly into our AP Euro class and led our two-day discussion over Enlightenment philosophy in Dr. Boyd's absence. Whatever is needed of Mr. Van Citters, he can and will get done.

When asked about what he most wanted students to know about him, Van Citters emphasized his admiration for the MBA community. Coming from a comparable environment gave him special insight into the high-pressure atmosphere of MBA and the stresses of a competitive school. From this personal experience with an MBA-esque atmosphere, Van Citters has the utmost respect for MBA students' work under the high expectations that teachers hold for them, and more importantly, "the expectations students hold for themselves."

A little sidenote about Van Citters is that he can speak Spanish. So, if you want to practice your skills or just give him a little surprise, next time you see him in the halls throw in some Spanish. Please help me welcome Mr. Van Citters to the MBA community.



Mr. Michael Van Citters
PHOTO: Scholar

MBA Welcomes Mr. David Smith

By Nicholas Leonard
Staff Writer

Emeka Nnadi's decision to part ways with MBA has impacted students and faculty alike. Well known around campus, Nnadi was a friend not only with athletes but with everyone on campus. This kindness drew many students and faculty members close to him as someone that they could always count on. As an athletic trainer, he spent a lot of time at MBA, often staying late to monitor various sporting events. But now that he has left, many have wondered who will fill the void created by Nnadi's departure, and that man is Mr. David Smith.

Some of you may already know Mr. Smith, who has been working alongside Nnadi to help MBA's athletes for years now. He has done a wonderful job, using his medical training and expertise to deal with injuries coming from almost every sport that MBA provides.

"What he enjoys most about working with the school is the admirable facilities and athletes he is able to connect with"

In an effort to introduce the student body to their new athletic trainer and his background, we set up an interview with Smith. His passion for and interest in the field of sports medicine began in high school, where he developed a strong bond

with his own athletic trainer. Smith's involvement in sports created a strong connection between the two, and, as a result, he was exposed to the world of athletic recovery and the knowledge that comes with it.

"Although he says he will miss the time he got to spend with Nnadi, Smith feels well prepared to take over the leadership role"

Following his high school career, Smith attended MTSU, where he pursued a career in sports medicine. Smith knew early on that he wanted to stay connected and be surrounded by the world of sports, which propelled him to start his career working at two other high schools in Memphis before coming to MBA.

We asked Smith if there was anything that someone should know about becoming an athletic trainer before pursuing the career. He responded by saying that it is important that they share a true love for sports and are okay with a flexible work schedule. Smith also expressed his fondness for MBA and its community, saying that what he enjoys most about working with the school is the admirable facilities and athletes he is able to connect with on a daily basis. The equipment Smith has been provided is remarkable, to say the least, and Smith's knowledge within the field allows him to treat



Mr. David Smith

PHOTO: Scholar

and help athletes recover from injuries most high school trainers could not.

The interactions with students that come in and out of the training room every day after school is also an aspect Smith valued highly when we spoke to him. He appreciates the unique conversions his position provides him and the friendships he is able to form through those exchanges.

Looking back at his time with Nnadi, Smith expressed great gratitude when mentioning his relationship with the former athletic trainer. Smith said that he learned many tips and was given a lot of advice from Nnadi

that has helped him become the best at his job. The two worked together for seven years and, over that time, developed a strong bond. Although he says he will miss the time he got to spend with Nnadi, Smith feels well prepared to take over the leadership role.

At this point in his career, Smith is ready to take the next step and take on the responsibility of being the main athletic trainer for the school. We encourage anyone dealing with an injury to visit Smith in his athletic training office located on the bottom floor of the Burk.

Gioia Legacy #3: Board Renews Mr. Gioia's Contract

By Cameron Kinser
Features Editor

As you all know, this year will be Mr. Gioia's last at MBA. In honor of him and his legacy, I will be recovering six articles from *The Bell Ringer* archives and republishing one per issue this school year. Each article was written about something Mr. Gioia has brought to the school, and each article will define one of many moments inherent to his legacy. Thus, these publications are called the Gioia Legacy Series. I hope everyone will take the time to read just a small list of all the things Mr. Gioia has done for the school, its alumni, its teachers, its maintenance staff, and most importantly its students. Mr. Gioia has transformed MBA into what it is today, and he deserves everyone's highest gratitude for his endless hard work and dedication to making every student a "gentleman, scholar, and athlete."

The third article in this series focuses on Mr. Gioia's fourth contract extension at MBA. Sam Weien, the writer of "Board Renews Gioia Contract," discusses Mr. Gioia's reflections on the growth of MBA and what he planned to do in the future. This piece also dives into the process of how the board facilitates contract negotiations with an MBA Headmaster. Please enjoy this article from the The Bell Ringer issue published August 15, 2012.

Board renews Gioia contract

By Sam Weien
Asst. News Editor

Headmaster Gioia this past spring

agreed with the Board of Trustees to extend his tenure with the school for an additional five years. Mr. Gioia, who has overseen a transformation of both the school's campus and its national and international reach, is beginning his fourth separate employment agreement with the school. He started his career at MBA with a three-year agreement, followed by three separate five-year contracts.

"The tenure extension process was thoughtful, and focused on the headmaster's commitment to the students, faculty, and development of the school."

The Board of Trustees considers school performance and how Headmaster Gioia is engaged in the school. Further, Mr. Gioia said, "the Board looks at the bottom line numbers such as the strategic enrollment and the faculty strength."

After this review, the Board makes a decision on the extension of Headmaster Gioia's tenure. The standard length of a tenure extension at most schools is five years.

As headmaster, Mr. Gioia acts as an ambassador for MBA and travels across the world. Of all the countries in which he has visited schools, several have especially caught his attention. He noted that he finds South Africa fascinating because of its leadership role on a continent in flux. He is also interested in China and its emergence in the century.

Mr. Gioia enjoys visiting other schools for the opportunity to see the uniqueness of education in different nations.

His extended travels have helped to create an international focus at MBA. Exchanges, international symposia and Wilson Language Grants are proof

of the emphasis Mr. Gioia has placed on a connection with the entire world.

Headmaster Gioia has several short term goals for the school. One is the establishment of a robotics program at the school. He also hopes that MBA will be able to connect with the Nashville community better, not only through service, but also through environmental responsibility and the possible establishment of a TEDx program on campus.

Longer-term goals include "maintaining and creating excellence while allowing individuality." He wants to sustain the quality of the faculty while increasing student awareness. But there are some challenges in the future as well.

One of the challenges, Mr. Gioia believes, will be "keeping the excellence of the school in a balanced manner." Moreover, since technology has become such a prominent part of education, he wants to make sure that MBA students "learn about and utilize technology, but use it as a tool and not a solution."

Mr. Gioia seems a permanent figure on campus, whether in his office, teaching English or leading the school each Monday at assembly in Paschall Theater, yet few students know the path that led him to MBA.

Mr. Gioia first came to MBA after 18 years at the Darlington School in Rome, Georgia. He began as a teacher but was eventually promoted to headmaster. During his eighteen years at Darlington, he became very close to former MBA headmaster Dr. Paschall, whom he had also known from Sewanee.

As Dr. Paschall prepared to step down in 1994, Mr. Gioia was contacted about the open headmaster

position. While he had received his undergraduate education at Sewanee and was very familiar with Nashville, Mr. Gioia said that he was truly drawn to MBA by "the balance of the school and the quality of relationships at the school".

During his years in Nashville, Mr. Gioia has seen many changes in education.

He has seen the rise of charter schools, as well as increased competitiveness in the private school community. He has witnessed the rapid entrance of technology into education.

He has also seen the shift from kindergarten through sixth grade to kindergarten through fourth grade elementary schools, which has affected the enrollment patterns at MBA.

Mr. Gioia has seen the typical student at MBA change as well. As he put it, "there is more diversity, not only on the box that a student checks on the SAT, but also in where the students come from. Also, the students are very intentional about being at the school".

Headmaster Gioia is very happy to continue at MBA, a school where "there is a lot of variety in the campus, faculty, and students, all balancing both academics and athletics". He also noted that he enjoys "seeing capable teachers acting as mentors, personally impacting the students."

In the past eighteen years, MBA has grown tremendously under the leadership of Headmaster Gioia. As the 146th year of MBA begins, Mr. Gioia hopes to continue implementing his vision for the future and have a positive impact on the school.

FRAHM, from Page 1

saxophone in 5th grade for the sole reason that his best friend also played it. But, he became fascinated with the instrument and continued to play saxophone for fun until around sixteen when a friend told him to listen to a few jazz classics, and his fascination transformed into a passion.

As his love for jazz grew, he began to put more and more time and effort into his development as a musician. He also had several upperclassmen whom he looked up to that influenced his development. Some of these influences went on to become famous jazz artists themselves, including Pat Zimmerli and Brad Mehldau.

Mr. Frahm went on to the Manhattan School of Music, where he received his degree in jazz performance after a year at Rutgers. After college, he says that he almost

never turned down a gig, played as much as possible, and made as many connections as he could. He also competed and won several competitions for up-and-coming musicians that gained him national recognition.

He played on his first record with Matt Wilson in the early 1990s and produced his own first record in 1999. Now, Mr. Frahm records and tours the US and Europe with his trio.

During his time at MBA, Mr. Frahm taught all four of the MBA jazz bands, focusing his teaching on improvisation and soloing. In the Basie Band class, he taught students the specific lick that he uses a lot while he was playing. He emphasized that everyone should utilize this lick and that it would help tremendously while soloing if done effectively.

In addition, he helped the pianos and saxophones with their respective

solos. He commented, "If you just go through a lot of notes and try and get it all in as fast as possible, it does not give the audience any time to absorb what is happening." He then helped students create and revise their solos, trying to get one bit of improvisation in rather than trying to cram everything into one solo.

Mr. Frahm then elaborated on how to become better at improvising. He said that what he did to start off was steal little tidbits from other artists' solos. He told us that it is a good way to start out until you can turn them into your own original solos.

The overall experience with Mr. Frahm was an enlightening one. He demonstrated how to use a simple line to start a solo, from which you can base everything else off that same line. He also expanded students' knowledge about how to spice up the line with different notes and rhythms.

These additions to the simple line help to build a solo that grows in complexity to draw in the audience and create a memorable music experience. One of his other major points of emphasis was learning from other musicians. Mr. Frahm illustrated how, from high school onward, he listened to other musicians and transcribed their solos. Once he got comfortable with another musician's style and technique, he could manifest his own masterpiece. Those years of imitation of some of the most talented musicians allowed him to develop his own unique sound that was a combination of all of the greats.

BACKPACK, from Page 1

problems with backpacks.

During this phase, Mr. Loudenslager learned of several major issues with existing backpacks. The largest problem was the complexity and durability of the mainstream bags. Most popular outdoor backpacks such as L.L. Bean or The North Face have two or more large pockets to store things. Most students interviewed said that a better use of space would be one large pocket to carry school supplies. Other issues common among many MBA students were broken zippers and the fact that typical backpacks weren't sturdy enough to stand up on their own.

With this feedback in mind, designers moved on to solving the major issues on the existing products. This process starts with rough sketches to communicate ideas. Then, the developers move on to physical models. These models are made from basic materials such as paper bags, bubble wrap, tape, and ribbons. Ms. Raines's advisory was instrumental in this part of the process, and they helped develop the models designed to fit the typical student's needs.

While they don't exactly look pretty, the models help the designers think through how to incorporate solutions into an improved product for consumers. When it's ready, potential materials are assembled to make a prototype to test and improve upon. Up to this point in the design process, there have been roughly five different iterations of the bag.

Throughout this stage, many features were added to improve the quality, comfort, and functionality of the product. Some of these features include one main compartment that fits much more than most mainstream bags fit, a sturdy foam structure to

keep the bag standing up when it's on the ground, several expandable exterior pockets including oversized water bottle pockets for large YETI or Nalgene bottles, and a laptop sleeve that fits most computers up to 17 inches and protects them from falls with a suspension system.

Continuing the list, other features include a height-adjustable back panel ergonomically designed to fit the thoracic curve of the spine, cast aluminum hardware that won't break as easily as the plastic hardware on mainstream bags, and a body made of ballistic nylon that is water-resistant and very durable. Overall, these features should provide MBA students with a significant upgrade from their current backpacks.

Many students at MBA were confused when the bags arrived but were quickly taken away. Shortly after arrival in November, Mr. Loudenslager discovered an inconsistency in the sewing on the completed backpacks. The issue occurred in the factory that manufactured the bags in Vietnam.

While the bags probably would have been fine, Mr. Loudenslager said that he didn't want the bags out the door until they were perfect. A more research-based reason that they must be fixed is that they are part of an experimental pilot program, and everything in the experiment needs to be controlled for more accurate feedback on issues with the bags.

The backpacks were transported to a sewing company in downtown Nashville called Music City Sewing. While small, the company works with many popular country music artists to create clothing for stage sets and touring acts. The bags were completed over Christmas break and delivered the week students returned to school.

MBA is the first product launch



Junior Schoolers work in teams to develop their own backpack prototypes.
PHOTO: Brady Bauer

for the new bags as well as the final prototype phase. When the bags are ready, MBA will have one final trial run before a massive launch at the start of the 2023 school year. Mr. Loudenslager said that MBA is one of the best test bed options because we carry so many textbooks and we are so rough with our bags at school, whether that be slamming them on the ground or walking across campus in torrential rain.

We have already received one survey and will receive a second in the coming weeks to give feedback on the bags' performance. The questions are specifically targeted questions about the bags' durability, comfort, and functionality. With this feedback, Pando will be able to make final tweaks to the bag addressing all of the minor issues. Therefore, our feedback is very important to the success of the bags in the future.

After necessary modifications are made, the bags will enter mass production and be sold in stores and online. In terms of advertising, Pando's biggest asset will be social media. The company is also considering using some sort of

ambassador program in which ambassadors would receive products for free to test and provide feedback.

In the future, Pando may want to expand to other types of bags such as sports bags or luggage. Mr. Loudenslager would also like to get more students involved in product and industrial design. To do so, he said that he would like to see a design club formed about product design or a Wilson summer class devoted to the subject to expose students to a field that is not often discussed in traditional high school classes. For example, Mr. Loudenslager taught a Winterim course at Harpeth Hall this year about such a topic.

MBA is receiving a wonderful gift with these backpacks. Please appreciate them and all of the work that has gone into the design, and make sure to fill out the form to make the bags the best product they can be. If you would like to learn more about the bags or learn more about their backstory, please visit Pandobags.com.

Joel Frahm Visits the Orchestra

By Noam Friedman
Staff Writer

Last semester, in preparation for the Fall Concert on November 13, 2022, MBA students in Chamber Orchestra Class had the opportunity to practice and play with musicians in the Nashville Symphony. One of the pieces we worked on with the professionals was an arrangement of The Inner Planets, containing themes from the planets Mercury, Venus, and Mars. Interestingly enough, only a few weeks before we started practicing with symphony members, I had seen the Nashville Symphony perform that very piece in the Schermerhorn.

MBA cello player in Chamber Orchestra, Ryan Riojas, and I worked

with cellist Xiao-Fan Zhang on several difficult sections of the music. His words of advice were encouraging, yet he also pushed us to play the music as best we could.

One of the two other pieces we were preparing was an arrangement of Concerto for Four Violins, mvt. 1 by A. Vivaldi. This piece required four of our MBA violinists to take the role of soloists. That small group worked tirelessly with Associate Concertmaster of the Nashville Symphony, Gerald Greer. Not by coincidence, Mr. Greer was also the former violin teacher of MBA's beloved orchestra director, Mrs. Wilson.

The third and final piece we were working on was Andante from

Symphony No. 4 by F. Mendelssohn, arr. R. Frost. Our main challenge with this one was to make it as musical as we could in order to enamor the audience.

Leading up to the concert, Nashville Symphony musicians visited us several times, and we split off into groups to practice separately. The violins, cellos, basses, and violas would spend the majority of class time working with the Symphony member of their respective instrument, and toward the end of class, everyone gathered back together to try to play the piece as one group.

Many strides were made from how we sounded at the beginning of class to how we sounded at the end of class. Other musicians that came to MBA

from the symphony to work with us include Francesca Bass, Michelle Lackey-Collins, Michelle Kim, Lucia Nowik, and Matt Abramo. Not only did they work with us ahead of our upcoming concert, but they also actually agreed to play with us the day of the concert. They reinforced the ranks of the MBA orchestra, which proved to be very critical since several students of MBA's Chamber Orchestra were ill.

We were all glad to better know the performers of our local symphony, and we were grateful to learn from their expertise. MBA orchestra would like to thank everyone who made it possible for Nashville Symphony members to come to MBA.

Analyzing MBA's History

By Claiborne Tompkins and Elias Franks
Staff Writer and Contributor

Coach Euverard's name is synonymous with MBA Football. During his 12 seasons as head coach, he has created a legacy that will outlast him for many years. This year was certainly no exception with Coach Euverard leading Team 124 to an undefeated regular season. Although the Big Red's season ended in disappointment, we will always remember the challenges Team 124 overcame. At the team banquet, Coach Sanders reminded the players that trophies will rust, but relationships will last a lifetime. To commemorate Team 124 and the Class of 2023's accomplishments this year, Elias Franks and I (Claiborne Tompkins), sat down with coach Euverard. Hopefully, these questions along with Coach Eu's responses paint the picture of MBA's amazing football culture. Please note that some parts of the interview were edited for clarity. Enjoy!

Growing up, did you play high school football or college football?

I did. I played little league football, probably when I was six years old, middle school football, high school football in East Tennessee, and then I was fortunate enough to play college football at Middle Tennessee State University.

How many years have you been a high school football coach?

It's my 31st year of coaching at several places, and I've been at MBA for the last 12 years.

Do you have a favorite memory from your coaching career or more specifically just from this season?

One of my favorite memories this year was camp at Sewanee when we had our night run. The way the team came together was special, specifically when Eric George carried Jackson Green up a hill for two hundred yards. I think he



Coach Euverard congratulates Morgan Holzapfel after securing a state title appearance.
PHOTO: MBA Athletics

would have gone further if we wouldn't have stopped him. That was a really good memory for me, and overall, I really enjoyed the season as a whole, it has been an incredible year with the guys. I have so many memories from coaching football for 31 years. Coaching my son at MBA is a great memory. MBA is just a phenomenal place where I am fortunate enough to be a coach.

With all your experience, how has your coaching of high school football changed?

Oh man, I think we definitely have had to adapt to the times. Since I first started as a coach, the way we used to teach blocking and tackling has changed. The head issue and concussions are up to the forefront of everything about football now. We were taught, especially when I played and when I first started to coach, you run your head through people on a tackle and now there is such an emphasis on taking the head out of the game and blocking and tackling with your shoulders instead of your head which was definitely needed. That has tremendously changed the way I've coached the game and approach the game of blocking and tackling.

Growing up playing football and now being a coach, did you have or do you have any role models that helped you overcome challenges?

Yeah, my dad, my high school football coach, and my college football coach are three of the most influential people in my life. My dad played high school football, and he was a blue-collar ironworker, but he loved football and loved to go out the yard and play with me. My high school football coach taught me a lot about toughness and perseverance and in my college coach for sure. My college football coach, Boots Donnelly, is in the College Football Hall of Fame, and he is a tremendous coach and taught me a lot about figuring kids out. He taught me to make them feel a part of the team and a kid that's not so talented and might not have the physical size, but just really looking at the heart and getting the most out of kids that's what he taught me.



Coach Euverard riles up the soldiers after a huge win at Brentwood Academy.
PHOTO: MBA Athletics

ic Season with Coach Eu

In what ways has the senior class had an impact on you and the team?

The one word that comes up is leadership with the senior class. We have five senior captains, but all of them could be captains. I just got through talking with Ty Burd who wasn't a captain, but he could have been a captain. There are so many kids who could have been a captain on this team. How they lead, how hard they worked, how they led by example, how they wanted everybody to be a part of the team, and how they created a culture of love are all some of my favorite memories of 31 years of coaching.

Going along with the culture of MBA football, how do you think MBA is able to perform at such a high level with a lack of talent when compared to other schools?

I think we have hard nosed kids who might not be the most talented, but they believe in the school, they believe in the coaches, and they believe in the culture that we are trying to coach them into. The foundation of the program is family, it is love, and it all starts there. I think that you have guys willing to sacrifice a lot of things: their time, their bodies, and what they put into it from trying to get bigger, faster, and stronger. It's just a culture that anybody would want to be a part of and I think the biggest thing for me is, my number one thing is, I want everybody to feel loved in this program, and that they matter.

Concerning the student section and the Big Red Nation as a whole, what are your thoughts on how they stand out?

They're great. They are so creative, they are so passionate. After the game, when they come down to be a part of the huddle and a part of our team is great. It was phenomenal this year, after every win, and it really means a lot to our players and coaches to feel that emotion, to feel that noise, and to feel that passion from those guys being crazy.



Coach Euverard gives parting words after tough game.
PHOTO: MBA Athletics

How do you see the future of MBA football going forward as it continues to change and develop?

Every year is different. Every team is different, and you have to start from the bottom every year. That culture just doesn't stay here because we're here. You have to build it. Every year's different, so hopefully we can do it again. Who knows about the future? All we can do is show up and go to work. There are no guarantees.

If you could give any piece of advice to future players or former players what would you say?

Have no regrets. Everything you do, try to do your best. Don't live in mediocrity.

What is a difficult challenge that you overcame as a player or coach?

As a player, I was moved in college from quarterback, the position I always wanted to play. I had my heart set on it, and I just knew I was going to be a college quarterback, and I was moved to safety on defense, and it crushed me. I had a choice to make: quit or roll my sleeves up and go to work. I think the foundation that my dad, my college coach, and people like that gave me by speaking into my life at an early age. It made me go to work, and I ended up loving it. I played safety and defense and had a great time doing it. It was one of the best things that could ever happen to me, especially for my profession as a football coach. I learned both sides of the ball at a really good football program.



Coach Euverard poses with senior Marcell Reed and teammates at signing day.
PHOTO: MBA Athletics

Top Ten Albums of 2022

By Carter Ozburn
Editor-in-Chief

2022 was a huge year for music. Finally the music world is over with the trope of the “COVID record,” and artists hit the studio hungry in 2022. I believe this was one of the strongest years for music in recent history. I would like to share with you the records that stuck with me the most throughout the year.

10: *Painless* by Nilüfer Yanya

UK native Nilüfer Yanya broke out on the indie scene with her 2019 debut *Miss Universe*, a dreamy collection of rock showcasing her guitar chops and range of influence. On this new record, Yanya further explores her sonic landscape, and like all great sophomore records, just made all the positives of the first one better. Layering guitars reminiscent of *In Rainbows* underneath her hushed, breathy melodies, she produces a soundscape unique and immediate. Lyrically, Yanya improves drastically, delving into oblique universal narratives of love and loss. *Painless* is a landmark indie rock album bursting with sonic density and talent, leaving listeners waiting to see where Yanya goes for here. **Song to Check Out: “Midnight Sun”**

9: *Florist* by Florist

New York band Florist tests the limits of simplicity with their new self-titled album. A touted double album, it combines the ambient solo work of lead singer Emily Sprague with a collection of nine gorgeous folk songs. The ambient work is interesting and unique in its pace and sonic diversity, but it’s the folk work that truly shines. Instrumentally, the ambience hangs high above the hushed drums and guitars, creating a whirling soundscape with Sprague’s tender voice at the forefront. Lyrically, Sprague shines with her potent, yet simple songwriting, delivering some of my favorite songs lyrically from this year. Florist delivers a reinvention record that is simply beautiful, with some of the most heartbreaking and immediate folk to date. **Song to Check Out: “Sci-Fi Silence”**

8: *Ants from Up There* by Black Country, New Road

British post-punk band BCNR made a name in the music world with their 2021 debut *For the First Time*, and on their new record the band established themselves as the leading force in modern punk music. After release, lead singer Isaac Wood announced his departure from the band, which is devastating considering his performance on this new record. His lyrics are incisive and destructive,



Alex G plays SXSW Austin in 2015.

PHOTO: Wikimedia Commons

delivered in such an emotional way that complements the music so well. Sonically, BCNR is stellar, bringing in influences from all spheres: jazz, blues, soul, and all eras of rock. The band certainly seems at the top of their game as of now, and I’m excited to see where they go from here. **Song to Check Out: “Concorde”**

7: *Heaven Come Crashing* by Rachika Nayar

Brooklyn-based Rachika Nayar made her debut in 2021 with *Our Hands Against the Dusk*, a haunting ambient work recorded with only her guitar, warping it into a mangled mass of melody and rhythm. On this new record, Nayar moves past the limits of her guitar into the sheen of electronics and dance music. There is a wonderful sense of pace on this record, breaking the trope of ambient music as “mood music.” The melodies and soundscapes remain immediate and interesting throughout, thematically tied together with a sense of impending doom. The record is enjoyable yet haunting, triumphant yet falling, and certainly one of my favorite (mostly) instrumental works in recent history. **Song to Check Out: “Heaven Come Crashing”**

6: *Mr. Morale and the Big Steppers* by Kendrick Lamar

Kendrick Lamar certainly needs no introduction, as he has established himself over his last three albums as the dominant voice of rap throughout the 2010s. Thematically, this new album is like Kendrick’s *White Album*, a bloated, varied tour-de-force of genres ranging from trap, jazz, soul, electronic, afropop, and ambient. Kendrick impresses with his execution of this wide sonic range, providing a backdrop to his similarly varied lyrics. The record acts as an exposition of his ranging mental states, with such vulnerability and poise that he has not shown before. Kendrick is human

on this new album, an incisive cross-section of his battling various nets thrown at us in the 2020s. **Song(s) to Check Out: “Mother I Sober” or “Father Time”**

5: *Wet Leg* by Wet Leg

With such a name, Wet Leg demands not to be taken that seriously. Taking from the Isle of Wight off the Southern coast of England, Wet Leg was formed on the top of a ferris wheel in 2021. Their debut brings a huge influx of personality and wit into the indie rock scene, reviving the rebellious spirit and attitude of the early 2000s. The instrumentals are brazen and fun, perfectly complementing lead singer Rhian Teasdale’s snarky vocal delivery. Teasdale’s hooks are memorable, and when she’s not growling, her layered falsetto is gorgeous and moving. This is just a fun album from start to finish, with spots of intense beauty breaking up the rebellious rock. **Song(s) to Check Out: “Loving You” or “Ur Mum”**

4: *Dragon New Warm Mountain, I Believe In You* by Big Thief

New York indie mainstays Big Thief decided in late 2019 to create the most definitive Big Thief record to date, with a complete exposition of their sound and style. This is the product, a 20-song opus spanning all facets of what makes Big Thief so great: great songwriting, great performances, and above-all, creativity. The wide variety of ideas on this record are all executed perfectly, keeping the listener interested throughout. Lead singer Adrianne Lenker’s songwriting is as poignant and precise as ever, whether she’s wailing over a war of fiddles or sweetly crooning over her trademark fingerpicking. The record is an indie tour de force, tying swaths of folk, country, rock, blues, even shoegaze together with Lenker’s singular voice.

Song to Check Out: “Little Things”

3: *Renaissance* by Beyoncé

Everyone knows who Beyoncé is so I’ll skip to her new album. *Renaissance* is stunning. Beyoncé bucks any expectation with this record, coming through with a brilliant new album largely influenced by dancehall and club music. She is eerily comfortable with this new sound, her layered vocals providing such a strong lead to these nods to funk, disco, and rnb. Even without Beyoncé’s stunning voice, the record is so sonically cohesive and well-produced. Lyrically, she feels comfortable in her own skin, writing odes to self-love and expression. The queen returns with a batch of the most memorable and creative pop music of the year. **Song to Check Out: CUFF IT**

2: *God Save the Animals* by Alex G

Trader Joe Jesus Alex G delivers his third incredible album in a row with *God Save the Animals*. Dropping the sheen of *House of Sugar*, this record is an exercise in orchestration. Drawing influence from a wide range of genres, the music is as enigmatic as it is enjoyable. Alex’s vocals glide over a collage of acoustic guitars, pianos, strings, and various electronics, sonically a culmination of his career thus far. The songwriting is oblique and vivid, using natural images of religion and animals as motifs. *God Save the Animals* reaches further into the enigma of Alex G, the visionary hipster spearheading indie rock. **Song to Check Out: Runner**

1: *Preacher’s Daughter* by Ethel Cain

24-year old Tallahassee native Ethel Cain appeared on Barack Obama’s 2022 playlist with her song “American Teenager,” a sardonic depiction of modern American life, sparking a string of memes and Reddit discussions. Cain’s music is divisive in that sense, it is decidedly Americana yet retains the disillusionment found on that song. Lyrically, she writes like a Flannery O’Connor of the information age, telling tales colored with the horrors of Southern life. Her honest pen is both poised and so raw, with some songs being technical masterpieces and others hard to stomach. Sonically they are as expansive as the Tallahassee fields of her youth, yet feel so intimate with her emotive and potent vocals. Some albums stand as landmarks of their time, microcosms of societal eras, and nothing is more true of *Preacher’s Daughter*. Ethel Cain captures the angst, longing, and loneliness of the country in her opus of beat Americana.

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A Question of Morality: Senior Tactical Day

Take One!

Let's Reconsider!

By Simon Cian

Assistant News Editor

Waking up on a dreary Wednesday morning with four hours of sleep and the stress of three days worth of tests, homework, quizzes, and sports still weighing on your shoulders, you might feel a little "sick." Either emotionally or physically, you are tired and sick. You do not and cannot get out of bed. You might not show up to school that day, rightfully, as you are "sick." These are the so-called "tac days," and I am here to tell you you should take one every once in a while.

"If taking a day off will help you come back to school more refreshed and focused, TAKE ONE!"

I would be lying if I said that I have never taken a tac day in my six years here on the hill. How could I not? Six years of long days sitting in class for seven hours, swimming, and then coming home to hours of homework and studying. Any reasonable person would get burnt out at some point and just want a day to reset and break the monotonous grind of school and work.

Now, I am not advocating for consecutive days missed, a whole week away from school, or repeated absences every couple of weeks; however, a day every semester cannot hurt you that much, can it? I would actually replace the phrase "tac day" with one more suited to the actual purpose of a tac day--- an "emotional wellness day." This wellness day describes the traditional tac day much better. After all, we take tac days to either catch up on work and sleep or to just decompress from the busy life that is being an MBA student. If taking a day off will help you come back to school more refreshed and

focused, TAKE ONE!

I suppose that since I am endorsing tac days (emotional wellness days), I should give you all a few tips and suggestions about how to properly take one. First, never take a tac day when you have tests and/or lots of homework due (especially not when you have multiple tests/quizzes). The whole point of a tac day is to help you catch up emotionally and mentally, not to set you back even further. Plan a tac day for a down day in which you won't miss a lot.

Secondly, make sure your parents email the school that you are sick. No point in getting demerits and having to sacrifice a Saturday morning and sleep for a tac day. Lastly, make sure to enjoy your tac day doing stuff that you wouldn't be able to do at school. This could be taking a walk or watching a movie, but don't just sit around in your bed all day doing nothing. Doing interesting stuff on your tac day will make it seem less like school and more like an actual break.

Anyway, take a tac day whenever you feel overwhelmed or like you need a break. Just make sure you follow some of the advice above, and you'll come back to school more energized and focused than ever. And don't let anyone (like Raleigh Maxwell) tell you otherwise.

By Raleigh Maxwell

Opinions Editor

The infamous "tactical" day has emerged as an attractive alternative to attending school among MBA students. When asking why their classmates are unexpectedly missing from school, fellow students often comment, "he's taking a tactical." Tacticals, also known as "mental health days," refer to a situation where a student will call in sick to the school when they are not actually sick, though some, pointing to the physical effects of poor mental health, would dispute this claim.

This trend should be ceased. As a student who misses around twenty-five days of school each year for debate, "tacs," as they are colloquially referred to, are the worst solution to busy weekends or long periods of missing school. The reasoning simply comes down to the cost-benefit of taking tacticals, with the costs clearly outweighing the benefits.

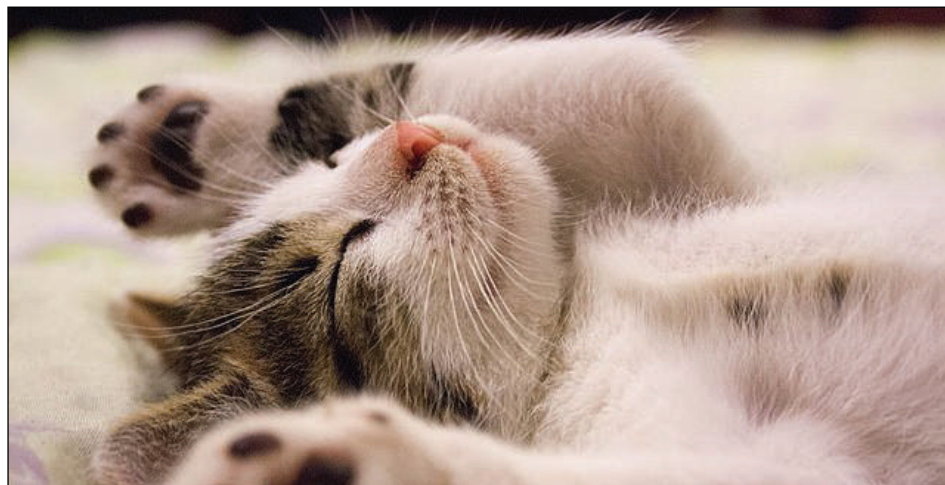
Proponents of tactical days point to mental health concerns, which most certainly represent a significant issue among high school students around the country and at MBA, but taking tactical days is the wrong solution. While teachers in my experience have been benevolent in their leniency to make up work, MBA students no longer live in the COVID era of MBA academics where all classes

were recorded and most school work was found online. Copying down notes from a classmate is simply not the same as receiving the engaging, in-person learning that MBA teachers provide students. In my experience of missing school days, I notice that I have done worse on portions of tests and quizzes concerning information I did not receive directly because of my absences. Missed tests or quizzes also require budgeting time within the day for making up those assignments, causing students to lose their study halls or breaks, both times when students complete other school work. These common occurrences accentuate the danger of tactical days.

"Tacs...are the worst solution to busy weekends or long periods of missed schools"

The increased workload as a result of tactical days worsens the mental health of students, creating a self-reinforcing feedback loop that must be disrupted. The logic behind taking tactical days—that students must be completely ready for taking tests or quizzes—similarly contributes to the immense emphasis on achieving certain grades, presenting scenarios where students feel dejected and burnout for receiving lower grades than the students hoped for.

This is not merely a call to students to significantly reduce the use of tactical days, but also a reminder to teachers to be cooperative with students in their making up of missed school work. This is also not to say that tacticals in every instance are unacceptable, as there are select instances in which dire circumstances require students to catch up. Those cases, however, are limited, and therefore the normalization of tactical days is a threat to MBA's academic prestige.



Similar to this cat, our Seniors need sleep right now more than ever
PHOTO: Wikimedia



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In Defense of Modern AP European History

By Simon Cian
Assistant News Editor

This article is in response to the article titled "Down with AP Euro" in November's issue.

Some will argue that European history should not be taught. They will tell you that, instead of teaching AP European History, MBA should teach history concerning "more important parts of the planet." This narrative that AP European history does not apply to the world today and that it should be tossed aside for other historical studies is utter blasphemy.

Those of you who have taken AP Euro know what a wonderful class it is. Covering topics from the Renaissance to post-WWII, AP Euro offers a complete study of global events. There is not one period of time in modern history that the Europeans did not in some way influence. To fully understand United States history requires some knowledge of European history.

As Dr. Boyd says, "It [AP Euro] introduces students to the histories of multiple nations and societies they may not be familiar with and broadens their understanding of the world. The European influence on the history of the United States is also substantial, and it helps to understand the roots of that - both the positive and negative aspects. For example, both the

Enlightenment and the transatlantic slave trade arrived in North America through Europeans, and both had an immense impact on shaping American society."

Teaching AP Euro is paramount in preparing students for problems that they will encounter and in developing the skills necessary to overcome them. Nobody wants to repeat WWI or WWII, and to avoid another world war requires knowledge of what events led up to the past ones. AP Euro allows students to analyze the catalysts behind historical events and the tensions which ultimately provoked reactions that then started wars. Without an understanding of European history, students would not be able to trace Enlightenment thought to American democracy or Russian history to today's war in Ukraine.

AP European History is not even technically a required class either. Students can also choose to take World History as one of their history electives. World History would provide students with a complete global perspective of events and history; however, World History lacks the in-depth knowledge that AP Euro provides. Instead, in AP World, students learn generalities and a few important historical events in a select few countries. Therefore AP Euro would seem to be the best class to learn a complete history of the most important and influential part of the



Furious Dr. Boyd considers taking a swing at humanity after reading our last issue.

world for the past thousand years. The Europeans have touched every part of the modern world, for better or for worse.

Some, however, in the history department think that AP Euro does not go far enough in teaching the important parts of history. Dr. Boyd thinks that "teaching European History horribly dilutes what people should really be learning about, which is British history." He goes on to say, "Why should all those other countries get to be included? What have they ever done? Honestly, even American History is unnecessary. Six years of British History - that would be the

ideal curriculum."

While teaching AP European history is, at this point, a highly controversial topic. Most would agree that at least some parts of the AP European curriculum are necessary in creating well-rounded and analytical historical thinkers. Could AP Euro maybe include a required ten-week summer program dedicated to teaching British history? Yes, I think it could, and to be honest it should. But that is not the point. AP Euro is a necessary part of the history curriculum for a reason, and it should remain there for Europe's massive impact on the world we live in today.

Titans Stadium: Worsening Larger Problems

By Isaiah Dulin
Assistant Opinions Editor

With the seemingly exponential growth that Nashville has been experiencing in the past decade, it makes sense that the city of Nashville would want to develop in such a way that caters to as many residents as possible. However, given the announcement of the new Titans stadium that is going to be built by 2026, an important question arises: does Nashville care about its residents? According to Mayor Cooper's office, the city plans "to produce a new people-first transportation strategy within his first year of office: Metro's Transportation Plan proposes \$1.6 billion in critical projects for community resilience, neighborhood livability, shared prosperity, and system preservation and performance." With such a massive budget, Nashville plans to have a more robust public transportation system than is already present given the relatively small metropolitan area of Nashville.

The announcement of the new



Derrick Henry moves forward on a home game Sunday

PHOTO: Wikimedia

Titans' stadium directly counteracts Mayor Cooper's initiative. Put simply, this new stadium is a \$2.1 billion investment into the tourism market in Nashville. The proposed plans state that the stadium would have 60,000 total seats, the smallest of any NFL stadium. This number is 9,000 seats less than Nissan Stadium. The expressed reasoning for such a downsize, as reported by *The Tennessean*, is to prioritize "nearby

hotels, venues and fan experiences." The sheer nature of this stadium is to increase the number of incoming tourists while using local taxpayers' dollars.

Nashville already has a severe tourism issue. Bachelor/bachelorette parties are increasing the demand for Airbnbs. This in turn pushes Nashville residents out of the valuable real estate and forces them to move further out of the city. As a result of the increased

population in these suburbs, the traffic problem in Nashville only extends and increases farther out from the city. One way Nashville could counteract this issue is to focus government spending on a public above-ground monorail system, which would decrease the number of cars on the roads. The new Titans stadium is a business venture that directly worsens Nashville's existing problems.

A reliable public transportation system is not out of the question for Nashville. To build a monorail, the city of Nashville would need to spend at least \$2 billion to connect the major suburbs along with a grid system within Nashville city limits. This form of public transportation would unclog the narrow streets in Nashville and give commuters a fast and inexpensive way to travel to and from work in Nashville. Nashville needs to prioritize its citizens before its tourists. When the city has taken care of the needs of its taxpayers, then it can expand into tourism-focused ventures with less political pushback and less spending.

Realignment Gives MBA New Challenge in Lipscomb

By Edwards Settle
Staff Writer

During the summer of 2021, The Universities of Oklahoma and Texas (Austin) made a decision that would change the landscape of collegiate football as we all knew it. They would leave their historic domination of the Big 12 behind and join the prestigious Southeastern Conference.

While this act of duplicity and disloyalty shook the very foundation of college football, who could blame these two programs for wanting to compete with the best? In Oklahoma's case, after the hiring of Bob Stoops in 1999, the program won the conference fourteen times in 20 years. With this staggering amount of success, it is painstakingly easy to see how the Big 12 simply got boring for the Sooners.

In an eerily similar fashion, Lipscomb Academy, a small Church of Christ school in Nashville hired former NFL quarterback Trent Dilfer to lead their football program in 2019. Like Stoops, he won a championship in his second season after the year of Covid-19 interference and has shown no signs of slowing down.

After winning by an average of 35.1 points per game this season (regular season), the Mustangs have decided to move to what is widely considered by many to be the strongest division in football: Division II-AAA.

This division includes the likes of Baylor, McCallie, and our very own team 124. It plays host to the top






Nashville area private schools such as BA and Ensworth while forcing each team to face a gauntlet of a schedule year after year.

Now add the hottest team in the state to the mix, and unbridled chaos will ensue. As mentos in a jumbo-sized Coke bottle will cause an eruption, the insertion of a new juggernaut into Division II-AAA will certainly upset the current balance of power.

Recently, MBA has competed with BA and Ensworth for football supremacy among Nashville area private schools. While this level of consistency has lately benefited MBA, it could easily change with competition from Lipscomb. With four schools competing for the same area, only one can win the region each year, and only two can meet in the state championship game.

Although the pathway to a state title will inevitably become narrower, the Nashville area will provide more of a challenge to the Chattanooga schools. Lately, McCallie school has been the dominant force of Division II-AAA, and they have beaten MBA teams twice in the State final as well as the regular season. The dream matchup of state champions in different divisions will now be realized with the McCallie-Lipscomb game becoming one of the most significant contests of the regular season.

One of the most direct consequences of this shift will be the emergence of a new rival for MBA.

1		Lipscomb Academy	12-0	26.7
2		Montgomery Bell Acade...	12-0	35.1
3		Baylor	10-2	32.4
4		Oakland	13-1	18.7
5		McCallie	10-3	3

Division Realignment adds another powerhouse to the Big Red's conference.
PHOTO: Edwards Settle

Future games between the Big Red and Lipscomb Academy will feature two schools that could not be more different. One is a proud Church of Christ school, while one is strictly secular. One is all-boys, while the other is co-ed. A few seasons ago, one was an afterthought and the other has seen its perennial dominance challenged in every way possible.

This seismic shift will bring unprecedented uncertainty to the Nashville area high school football scene. Despite this lack of clarity, one thing is certain: Soon, Lipscomb will enter into MBA territory. MBA is currently at the top of the Nashville area mountain, and Lipscomb is a threat on the horizon.

Many football experts believe that MBA and its Division II-AAA counterparts are not prepared for what Lipscomb will bring to the table, but for now, MBA is the team to beat. The team has had the upper hand on BA and Ensworth and back-to-back state final appearances have brought it to a high point. But Lipscomb has been good, and MBA will lose many of its starters by the time the two teams play.

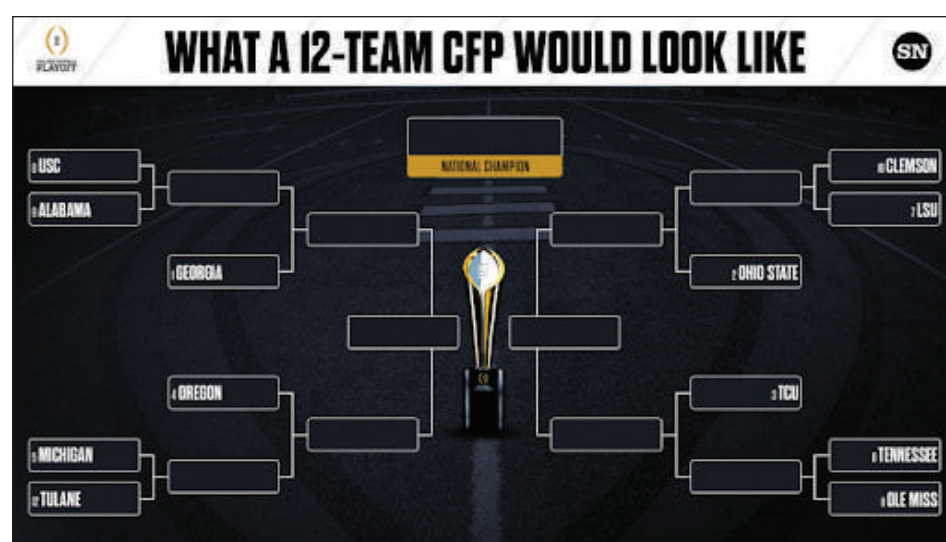
Nevertheless, the question remains: Can Lipscomb beat the Big Red at Tommy Owen? Can they go eye to eye with the big red student section for four quarters?

Rejuvenating a Monopolized Industry

By Nate Cantrell
Assistant Sports Editor

Although traditionalists despise the movement to a 12-team College Football Playoff for "destroying the integrity of the game," college football has been on the decline in the entertainment business for the past couple of years. Something has to change. TV ratings have dropped dramatically as fans around the nation find the playoff games boring. Clemson, Alabama, and Ohio State have monopolized college football, making up 17 of the 28 total appearances. The 2021 National Championship had all-time lows in TV ratings and national viewers.

Now the aforementioned traditionalist might say, "If your team didn't make the playoff, tough luck. Watch their bowl game instead." That would be a solid alternative if most draft prospects not included in the postseason didn't opt out of New Year's Six and other spotlight bowl games.



Derrick Henry charges through defenders for another gain.
PHOTO: Wikimedia

The solution to anticlimactic postseasons you may ask? An expanded playoff format. Maybe 12 teams is overkill, but it is a step in the right direction. Now we have the possibility to watch several elite teams face off against one another with a national title on the line. This incentive motivates the top prospects

"College football has been on the decline in the entertainment business for the past couple of years and something has to change."

to stick around for a few more games because a national championship is well worth the risk of injury to a collegiate athlete.

Also, imagine the upsets. The Cinderella stories. I know football is a much different game than basketball, but March Madness has dominated the college sports season because of the unpredictability. Now, an elite Alabama team versus a conference runner-up Kansas State (for example) will be more like March's 1-seed playing the 16-seed, or the 2-seed playing the 15-seed, but the possibility is much more exciting than watching the same five or six teams compete every year with the occasional Cincinnati, Washington, or possibly TCU sprinkled in there.

We have already seen the competitiveness of the SEC in this year alone, and the addition of a representative from each Power-5 conference only increases the anticipation for the 12-team playoff format.

MBA Overtaken With World Cup Fervor

By Peter Roark
Staff Writer

Many fevers have swept across campus these past few months, but none has been more prevalent than the “World Cup fever.” The contagious sickness appears in strong surges about once every four years, and its months may vary. Symptoms include emotional rollercoasters, passionate chanting, and an occasional humming of “World Cup” by IShowSpeed. Experts say the wave ended around December 18th, but by now we should know how much we can trust experts to predict the lifetime of viral illnesses.

The 2022 Qatar World Cup has seized the attention of the Hill, an effect that can be attributed to soccer’s enormous popularity in the United States. Just kidding. The quadrennial tournament’s hype has a lot to do with games being broadcast in the dining hall during lunch. Before the World Cup, the projector seldom provided entertainment, besides the Sportscenter Not Top Ten. In November and December, students stopped themselves on their way to a second serving to make sure they didn’t miss a goal. In the age of replays and social media, missing a goal may not seem like much, but no replay captures the feeling of a midday mosh pit after taking down two plates of pasta.

Unfortunately, students in E block missed out the dining hall experience, as most games started at one o’clock. One of those one o’clock games was the final group B match between the United States and Iran. Win, and

the United States move on to the round of sixteen; anything less, and the expectations that the USMNT had built across campus would be shattered into a thousand pieces, needing another four years to reform.

Having followed US soccer over the years, I understood that the stakes for the men’s team were higher than just a round of sixteen bid. Despite the jokes, soccer’s popularity in the United States has been increasing, whether that be through the MLS, Premier League, or Champions League. A strong performance might convince non-soccerwatching Americans that their dominance in basketball and football could extend to another sport. On the other hand, a poor performance would crush any sentiments that soccer is a real sport and deserves to be played. After all, who wants to watch a sport if the United States isn’t the best at it?

As expected, the dining hall was electric for the Christian Pulisic’s first half game-winner against Iran, but the USA later fell to the Netherlands in FIFA’s version of the Sweet Sixteen. British soccer enthusiast and MBA senior Henry Pitt graciously shared some of his thoughts about the United States performance.

“The U.S. had such a great opportunity to grow the sport in the country... but they blew their chance with a boring style of play that saw a total of three goals across all their group games before crashing out in a disappointing game against the Netherlands,” Pitt said, “Hopefully they can turn things around before they host in 2026.”

I have to agree with most of



Messi scanning the field in Argetina’s biggest game.

PHOTO: Wikimedia

Henry’s points; I was disappointed in the overall style of play and the end result, but having watched the disappointing 2018 campaign and the underwhelming 2022 qualifying, I thought that the team rose to the occasion and played some of their best soccer in red, white, and blue.

To grasp a fuller perspective of how the rest of the soccer world has reacted to this World Cup, I turned to MBA’s own expert on the rest of the world, Mr. Kelly.

What team has surprised you the most this World Cup?

Germany! What has happened to this powerhouse of a tournament team? I’ll tell you what has happened. The German team’s needy expression of emotional unrest and its pouty, arms akimbo, rejection of neoclassical literary norms has put them in a right old funk. At least that’s what Herr Daugherty tells me in our conversations at der wasserkuhler. Also, Dr. Rader points to the team’s lack of sartorial elegance as a deficiency not unassociated with abject failure. (Or Fehler ablehnen, as they say in the finer menswear stores of Hamburg.) Morocco also has surprised me because usually African players, if they are any good, follow the money and go play in Europe in La Liga, Serie A or The Premiership, and if they have partial Spanish, French, or Belgian heritage, they declare for a European national team. Therefore, It was heartening to

see this dachshund of an underdog, (or “almustadeaf” as they say in Chefchaouef), turn the tables on these illustrious, Iberian practitioners of tic tac football, and to see the illustrious Iberians fall victim to the greatest “panenka” in World Cup history.

Who did/do you want to win?

First and foremost, I wanted Ireland to win, but we couldn’t. Because we weren’t at the finals. Because we weren’t good enough to qualify. Where was Coach Cheevers when we needed him? I wanted Japan to win because the Japanese are so polite and clean up after themselves, according to The New York Times. I also was rooting for Qatar because they seem to like cleanliness too, and they have beautiful, well built stadiums. Now I want Brazil to win (for our Brazilian staff member, Natalie Byrd), and I would like them to beat England (sorry Dr. Boyd and Mr. Farhoumand) on penalties after a 3-3 regulation time result and with Harry Kane missing the final English penalty.

How do you feel about the MBA’s community’s reaction to the World Cup?

I think the junior school owned it in terms of lunchtime atmosphere - especially during the penalty shootout between Spain and Morocco. Tommy Carson was an upper school, standout world cup fan and should be selected as a US Fifa ambassador in 2026.



Players line up before the pivotal Korea v. Uruguay

PHOTO: Wikimedia

MBA Alum Shines in College Basketball

By Andy Nunn and Will Elrod
Sports Editor and Business Manager

“Drewwwwwww” rains down from the Memorial rafters. No, it’s not chanting from the beloved Bryce Drew era. It’s the crowd roaring for one of their most cherished players. Loved and adored by Vanderbilt fans, Drew Weikert, a class of 2018 alumnus of MBA, finished a very successful basketball career last year at Vandy in a way that many didn’t suspect.

As a freshman, Weikert began his career at Centre College, a Division III program in Kentucky. Soon after, he transferred as a walk-on to Vanderbilt during his sophomore year. Coincidentally, this was Jerry Stackhouse’s first year as a head coach at Vanderbilt. With Vanderbilt’s basketball team lacking depth and struggling to compete due to a lack of quality players, Weikert had a great opportunity to expand his skills at a Division I program.

“He would play his heart out every time, regardless of who he was guarding or what team he was playing”

When Weikert joined the team, he was extremely young and lacked experience in D1 basketball. However, his effort and determination quickly made him stand out as a walk-on. He started on the scout team, working to emulate the playing styles of opposing teams. During his sophomore year, Weikert played in four games against Buffalo, Georgia, Missouri, and Ole Miss. In these games, he only played in the last few minutes as Vandy got into some foul trouble. Nevertheless, Weikert’s sophomore year was a transitional year for him as he looked to build off these fundamental steps and play a bigger part in the program.

Weikert continued his path of improvement in his junior year, although he only played in two games against Ole Miss and Mississippi Valley State. This season can be viewed as a role-playing year for him. Drew spent lots of time on the scout team, playing a pivotal role in helping Vanderbilt’s team prepare for big games as he worked to understand the opposing teams’ tendencies and the way they ran the game. Weikert received numerous shoutouts from Coach Stackhouse over the years for his dedication to making the team around him better with his hard work and drive, even if he wasn’t necessarily getting as much playing



Drew Weikert scans the court, looking for an open pass.

PHOTO: Wikimedia Commons

time as the other players.

As a senior, however, all this changed, and Weikert saw a huge increase in his playing time. Last season, he played in fifteen games and even started in five of those games. Most notable for me was Weikert’s start against a ranked Tennessee team at home. As a fan, I was extremely excited to see him play in such an important game. He left it all out on the court, defending some of UT’s best players and giving Vandy its best shot at winning.

“Drew will go down in Commodore history as one of the most cherished players of all time”

Over the senior season, Weikert stepped into a high-pressure defensive role. He would go out and guard whomever he was matched up with, which is why fans loved him so much. He would play his heart out every time, regardless of who he was guarding or what team he was playing. He was a joy for Vanderbilt fans to

watch as he always gave 110% and often was successful in drawing a charge or getting a cheeky steal.

Throughout last season, Weikert showed up when the team needed him most. He always went above and beyond while keeping his intensity to the max. While playing these crucial defensive stints, Weikert was always good for a sneaky three or a clutch lay-in. Throughout his senior season, Weikert shot a clean 48% from the field combined, going nearly 40% from deep as well. As a fan, it felt like Drew could hit a clutch three-pointer any time the team needed him to.

As a result of his many efforts, Drew was given a full scholarship on the Vanderbilt basketball trip to Hawaii during Christmas to play in the 2021 Diamond Head Classic. The team won the tournament, but the highlight of the trip for many was getting to see Coach Stackhouse praise Weikert for his work ethic and his critical role on the team. Coach Stackhouse then awarded Weikert a full scholarship, thanking him for how he embodied what Vanderbilt strives to be. The team went ballistic during this announcement, and that just goes to show how much he was loved at

Vanderbilt.

The fans adored Weikert. The team loved how hard he worked and how humble he was. Weikert will go down in Commodore history as one of the most cherished players of all time. At most home games, you could see the cardboard faces of Weikert scattered throughout the student section. Every time he scored or made a good play, Memorial Gymnasium would literally erupt in support. He had a special place in the hearts of many Vandy fans, considering that he was a Nashville native and his experience coming as a walk-on to starting in home games against top-25 SEC opponents. The team, however, loved him most of all, admiring the way that he carried himself and his work ethic.

Weikert went on to graduate from Vanderbilt with a degree in medicine, health, and society in the spring. Currently, Weikert is in his first year at Belmont University’s law school just down the road. So expect to still see him around Nashville. We have already seen him walking to our seats at a Vanderbilt basketball game this year. Thanks for everything you gave Commodore Nation, Weikert!

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Chat GPT: Are There Benefits to This AI?

By Aidan Moon

Assistant Analytics Editor

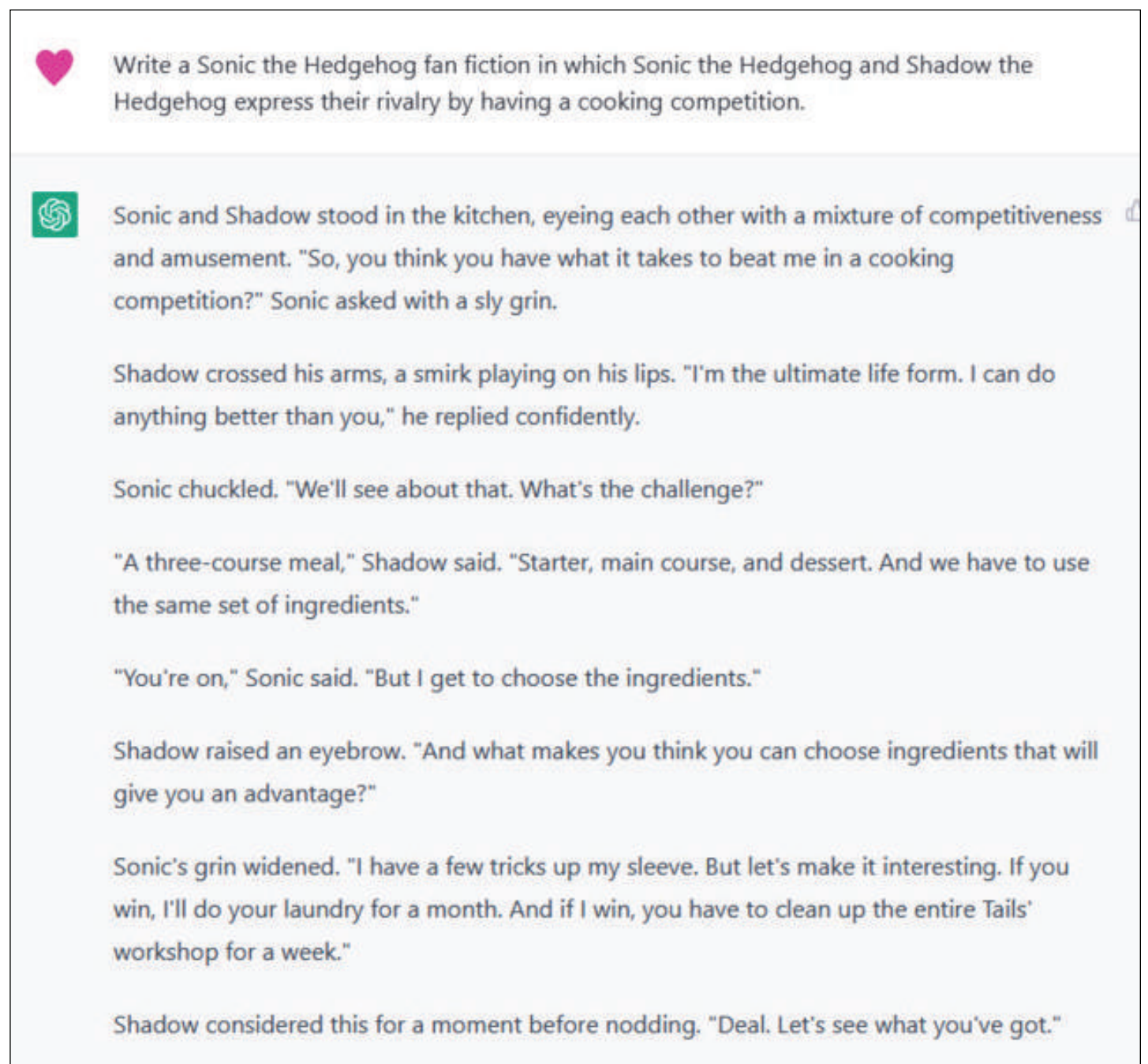
ChatGPT, the state-of-the-art language model developed by OpenAI, has received significant attention for its potential to revolutionize the way academic writing is taught and produced in high schools. The program is estimated to have reached 100 million monthly users in January, making it the fastest-growing consumer application in history. On one hand, ChatGPT's advanced language understanding and generation capabilities could help students improve their writing skills and enhance their academic performance. On the other hand, there are concerns about the impact that such technology could have on the creativity and critical thinking skills of students.

One of the major positives of ChatGPT is its ability to serve as an AI-powered writing assistant. This technology can provide real-time feedback on grammar, syntax, and style, helping students avoid common writing mistakes and learn to communicate their ideas more effectively. Additionally, ChatGPT can be used to generate outlines, summaries, and even complete essays, saving students time and effort while allowing them to focus on the content of their writing.

“This technology can provide real-time feedback on grammar, syntax, and style, helping students avoid common writing mistakes”

Another positive aspect of ChatGPT is its potential to alleviate the workload of teachers and staff. By automating routine tasks such as grading and providing feedback, ChatGPT could free up teachers to spend more time on individualized instruction and personal interactions with students. Additionally, ChatGPT's ability to generate written material could make it easier for teachers to provide students with writing assignments and prompts that are tailored to their specific needs and abilities.

However, there are also concerns about the negative impact that ChatGPT could have on the creativity and critical thinking skills of students.



The screenshot shows a chat interface with a pink heart icon on the left. The user's prompt is: "Write a Sonic the Hedgehog fan fiction in which Sonic the Hedgehog and Shadow the Hedgehog express their rivalry by having a cooking competition." The AI's response is a multi-paragraph story. It starts with Sonic and Shadow in a kitchen, where Sonic challenges Shadow to a cooking competition. Shadow accepts, stating he is the "ultimate life form" and can do anything better. Sonic then challenges him to a three-course meal (starter, main course, and dessert) using the same ingredients. Shadow agrees, and Sonic chooses the ingredients. The story ends with Shadow considering the challenge.

The auto-writing AI seems to have no limits, only the creativity of the user.

PHOTO: Wikimedia

By relying too heavily on AI-generated writing, students may not

“The reliance on AI could discourage students from taking the time to revise their work and may result in a decrease in overall writing quality”

develop their own writing styles and may lack the ability to think critically and independently. Moreover, the reliance on AI could discourage students from taking the time to revise their work and may result in a decrease in overall writing quality.

Additionally, there are also concerns about the ethics of using such technology in the classroom. With the ability to generate high-quality writing, there is a risk that

students may be tempted to plagiarize or use AI-generated material as their own, potentially leading to academic dishonesty. Moreover, the use of AI technology in the classroom raises broader questions about the role of technology in education and the need for students to develop essential writing and critical thinking skills.

In conclusion, while ChatGPT has the potential to transform the way

“It is important for educators and policymakers to carefully consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of using Chat GPT”

writing is taught and produced in high schools, there are also valid concerns about its impact on the creativity and critical thinking skills of students. It is important for educators and

policymakers to carefully consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of using ChatGPT in the classroom and to ensure that students are still encouraged to develop their own writing styles and critical thinking skills.

Finally, it is worth noting that ChatGPT should be viewed as a tool, not a replacement. While it may make certain aspects of writing and academics easier, it cannot replace the individualized instruction and personal interactions that are crucial for students to develop their writing skills and critical thinking abilities. The key is to strike a balance between utilizing the benefits of ChatGPT while also ensuring that students are still encouraged to develop their own unique voices and independent thought.

This article was written by the ChatGPT software.

Freshmen Live in the Moment, Appreciate the Now

By Nathan Hersel
Contributor

Montgomery Bell's largest 9th Grade class in school history has begun embarking on our second semester. The first semester was extraordinarily successful and exciting, and I am optimistic about further developments in the 9th grade in this new semester.

Multiple talented and hardworking first-year students achieved honors and recognition in debate, art, and sports, as one of the 15 new first-year

students. I was proud to call myself an MBA student treasurer after an eventful and dynamic election season.

Montgomery Bell 9th graders have seized every opportunity afforded to them and exemplified all positive traits instilled in us by Montgomery Bells' present and invested faculty and staff.

The 9th grade had a demanding but enriching exam week. 9th graders applied themselves to their studies, and their time sacrifice and dedication I found very admirable.

Montgomery Bell's 9th grade also

has routinely succeeded in taking part in all school green initiatives, being the grade with the most participation in carpe clean energy initiatives. Student government has successfully rallied students to participate in school services and activities, such as class meetings and recycling duties.

As for this new semester, I am incredibly optimistic to see the 9th grade successfully and gentlemanly make the most of their final freshman semester. The end of this semester marks a massive change at MBA, most obviously the departure of

MBA's highly esteemed headmaster Mr. Bradford Gioia. MBA's current 9th-grade class has the pleasure of experiencing headmaster Gioia's final year while being fully emersed in a new chapter of this storied institution.

My message to all my 9th-grade students is to appreciate these moments and changes, fully immerse themselves in all aspects of MBA life, and feel free to contact faculty helpers or one of your class officers like yours genuinely with any of your questions.

Sophomores Squirm Under Presidential Pressure

By John Howard
Staff Writer

Unfortunately, not too much has happened since the last edition of the class newspaper, which is why it was especially refreshing when we were met with a sudden surprise! Our long-reclusive president Elias Franks finally gave the Bell Ringer a statement in response to the criticism brought against him.

He issued the following statement: It has recently come to my attention that a number of my constituents are disaffected with the regime over

which I have presided over during my benevolent tenure. Some beseech me with every term of abuse imaginable. "He's Tyrannical!" some say. "Why! He's a pyrotechnical megalomaniac," say others. I am aware of the growing influence of those who lustfully lurk in the shadows drinking secret toasts to my destruction as they sow conspiracy hostile to my amatory dominance. But I maintain that I rule with a gentle hand. Firm, but gentle still.

Yes, admittedly my heart yearns for the accumulation of unstoppable power, but it is for the greater good of my people - the greater good of you

all!

Anyway, since our return to campus, the sophomores have been hard at work on our sophomore research projects. Because of this assignment, we enjoyed a theme day without a theme for the first time since early freshman year. Yay!!!

In other news, the ultimate frisbee attendance numbers, which once included most of the sophomore class, have been on the decline. Sophomores made up most of the team for a while, but now, as other sports have started, they have sadly started to quit the team. But hey, it was fun while it

lasted.

Additionally, we bring you a much needed update on the stock market competition. Our very own "Team Bullish Bears," made up of Lyon Playfair, Graham Smith, Alan Nguyen, Hudson Ross, and Ronit Chandra finished fifth in the state after making a massive comeback from -\$96,801.42 all the way up to \$111,582.75.

With the new semester upon us, we encourage everyone to get a strong start and make this one the best yet! We love you and we're rooting for you!

Juniors Halfway There, Living on a Prayer

By Frank Pierce
Staff Writer

The junior class has started this third semester where we left off. After a long and well deserved break where the junior class was given a chance to unwind after an already hard enough first semester, but the junior classmen have the hardest trek of the journey ahead of them. While they may be done with the Canterbury Tales and the fall semester exams, the junior class has to do something they have yet to encounter in their high school careers, standardized testing.

The dreaded tests are falling to the forefront of everyone's minds as we get closer and closer to starting to take ACTs and SATs in the coming months. The Junior class expects to take this challenge head on, coming in Sundays to attend Dr. Lech's ACT course.

On top of junior class academics we have a lot of news concerning upcoming sports. The swim team is headed to State with a ton of junior classman, including Charlie "Chuck" Coles and Davis "Biggest" Thompson. The seadogs are headed to the University of Tennessee, where they'll be facing off against McCallie

and Endsworth. The Junior class has also shown out on the court with H McIlwain, Hutton Durret, and Benton Brown taking names for varsity, as well as in the stands being far and away the most rowdy out of all the grades in the student section. Lastly on the broadcasting side of basketball, the Dynamic Duo of Reid Jacobs and Zeke Stroud have been incredible behind the mic for the Big Red with some comparing them to the likes of John Madden and Jim Nantz.

In other news the Junior class after waking up too early in the morning were given their class rings which

have almost surely been lost by half the class already. Throughout the school year the Junior class have also been saving up tons of money for prom. From the poinsettia sale emails to late nights working the cash register at Basketball games with Herr Rader, the Junior class has worked hard to ensure that prom is as great as possible, and so far the Junior class has exceeded expectations and are currently rolling in cash having a plenty of money to put on a party which will put last years prom to shame.

Seniors Ponder Circadium Rhythms, Drafts, and Minimalism

By Maithreya Gowda
Analytics Editor

The new year has ushered in a wave of rapid change, as the senior class settles into its second semester. After spending half the year working tirelessly at the endless pile of college apps and homework, most of us have used this second half to achieve the once-impossible, and highly immoral, eighth hour of sleep. Allegedly, "adequate sleep" may soon be a demeritable offense, joining unforgivables like texting a family member and arriving 3.7 seconds late

to advisory.

To kick off the second semester, the seniors got first dibs on the new \$250 Pando backpacks. This guaranteed each of us one of the black-colored backpacks, while the sophomores had to result to drastic measures to catch a glimpse of one. Hopefully, we'll be able to continue depriving the underclassmen of resources to fulfill our own needs.

Because of the added time on our hands, many of us have begun investing our energy into more important pursuits. Arena 3 in ScoreMatch has proven to us that

rigged sports are very real, Madden has demonstrated each student's strong commitment to the honor code, and the G Block Study Hall Draft has proven to Mr. Tate that MBA is full of people who ask the important questions. Truthfully, our class is more united than ever, as most feelings of stress and competitiveness have subsided.

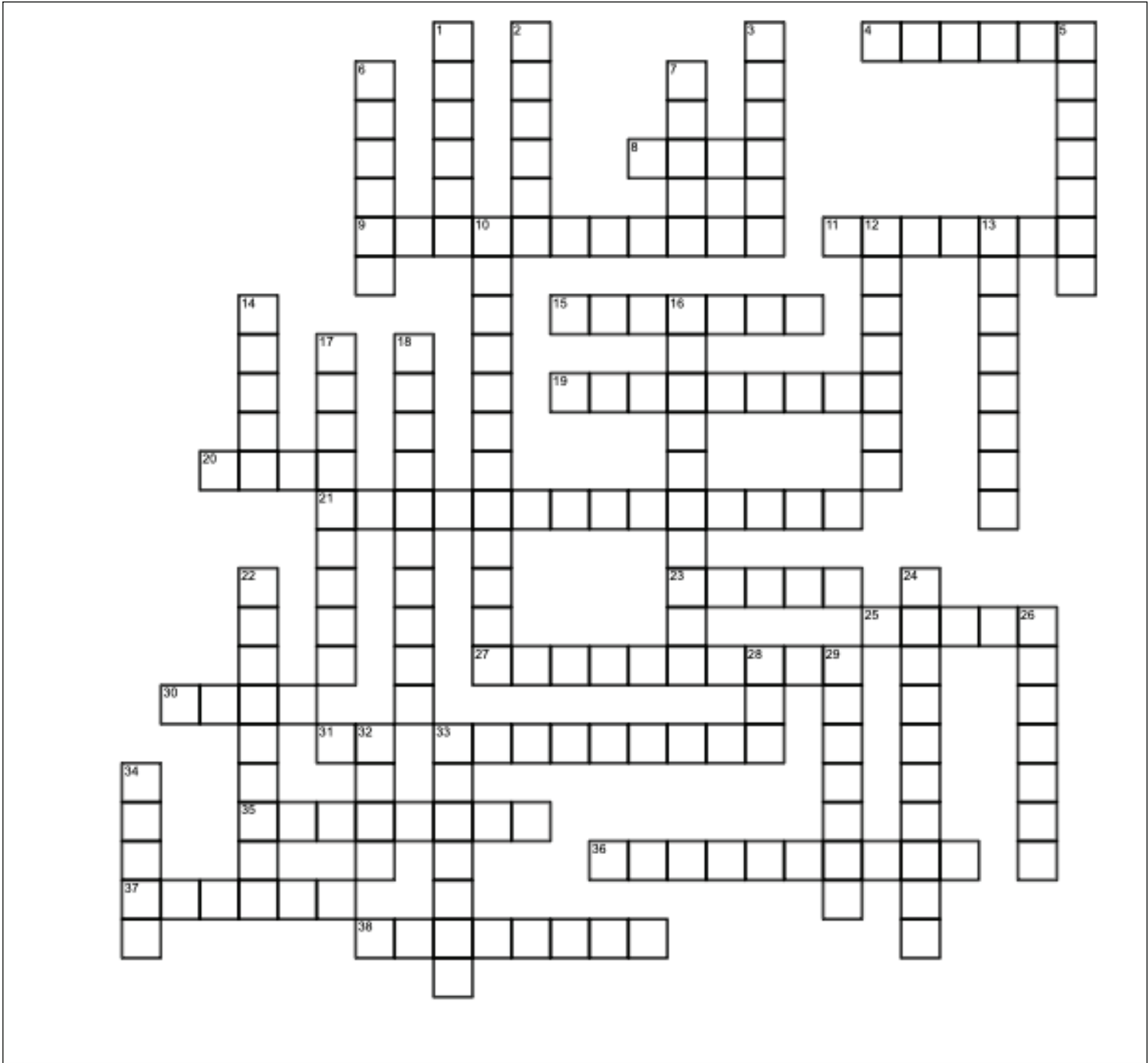
College has been a rocky road for us thus far, but we were all proud to see our athletes committing to some great places both close to and far from home. Signing Day was a huge success for the Class of '23. Similarly,

the sports teams that these guys are on have been performing phenomenally.

Overall, things are looking good for us as we near the end. While there's a lot to look back on, there's a good amount to look forward to as well. Little Brother events, delicious meals from Avi, Senior Assassin, and Ireland should help shape us into the gentleman-scholar-athlete we all wish to be. Until then, our minimal effort will be rewarded with maximum results.

Winter Crossword

By Carter Ozburn



- Across

4. Kesha hit about falling wood

8. To serve democracy

9. Malcolm’s location in the early 2000s sitcom

11. Tony in this HBO masterpiece

15. Purple blob from Mcdonald’s

19. Country home to Perth, Adelaide, and Brisbane

20. A group of wild animals

21. Term used to determine when to properly wear coats

23. Meaning the opposite

25. Little sister to Bell Ringer

27. Slang for phone-obsessed teen
- Down

1. A voter’s canvas

2. To lower concentration

3. Infamous Hugh in the sports world

5. Tasted when eating skittles

6. i.e. peak, tippity top

7. Infamous Nashville 2010 disaster

10. Name of this African mammal means “river horse”

12. Skill metric in sports video games

13. A in PEMDAS

14. To find a scapegoat

16. Lack of leads to burnout

17. Famous 1969 music festival held in New York

18. First woman to win a Nobel Prize

22. The 1975’s 2013 hit above having a sweet tooth

24. Dental pixie

26. Biggest tech company in South Korea

28. Kind of prices your grandpa complains about

29. Vulnerable point of both Death Stars

32. Toad’s companion in the peaceful book series

33. National animal of Scotland

34. Milkshake term at Sonic